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WEEKLY

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GST INCLUSIVE

Labbozzetta New Chairman



Perth Glory's Bobby Despotovski striving to pull away from Eastern Pride's Mark Atkinson.



Tony Labbozzetta: Soccer Australia's new Chairman.

By John Economos

"I will be vigorously addressing issues, not personalities."

These were the stern, crystal clear opening words that Soccer Australia's newly elected Chairman, Mr Tony Labbozzetta pledged to ABSW last night.

"Unity, transparency and sheer hard work is what it's going to be all about."

"I intend working towards producing unity to enhance the game."

Soccer Australia's new Board of Commissioners now comprises: Labbozzetta (Chairman-NSW), Greg Wood (Deputy Chairman), Cheryl Bart (NSW), Joe Brondolino

(Victoria), Les Avory (South Australia) and Bill Walker (N.S.W.).

Messrs Walker and Avory were the two newly elected Commissioners.

Mr Labbozzetta now is in the hunt to find a high-profile figure to install as the new President to replace the retiring Neville Wran, a former Premier of NSW.

It's understood that Labbozzetta is out to target a powerful identity from the corporate sector, most preferably some one that has also had some affiliation with the code.

Don't be at all surprised if the dynamic name Frank Lowy, chief extraordinaire of the almost world wide renown shopping centre giant, Westfield Holdings, is Labbozzetta's ideal goal.

EVERTON GRABS YOUNG AUSSIE

By Arvind Hickman

Exclusive

David Carney of Glen Alpine (NSW) has just signed a three year contract with Premier League club Everton, fulfilling a life-long dream.

The 17 year old has been an avid supporter of the Blue's since he first donned football boots at the age of four.

Carney knocked back an offer from Barnsley, with whom he had recently trialled for to pursue a move to Goodison Park. David was spotted by Everton Academy Director, Ray Hall, while playing for NSW in the state titles at Canberra.

Carney's former coach at the NSW Institute of Sport, Kelly Cross, believes the left-side flanker has a wealth of potential and the right attributes to

make it in England. Kelly should know seeing he played a large role in the development of arguably Australia's finest left sided player, Harry Kewell.

"David's a classy left sided player who's got a very sweet left foot. He's probably as good with the left foot as Harry Kewell was at the same age," he said.

"He's an excellent kid and he's got just the right qualities. He's got a sense of humour and a little bit of mongrel, but totally controlled."

"I think he will play first grade in England, but you know he may even play first grade Premier League."

Carney has already impressed at Everton with appearances for the Under-19 team, as well as a recent call-up to the Reserve team, where he scored the only goal in a friendly after coming on for the last 20 minutes.



Talented Young Australian left midfielder, David Carney (centre), with Everton Manager, Walter Smith (right) and Director of Youth Academy Ray Hall.

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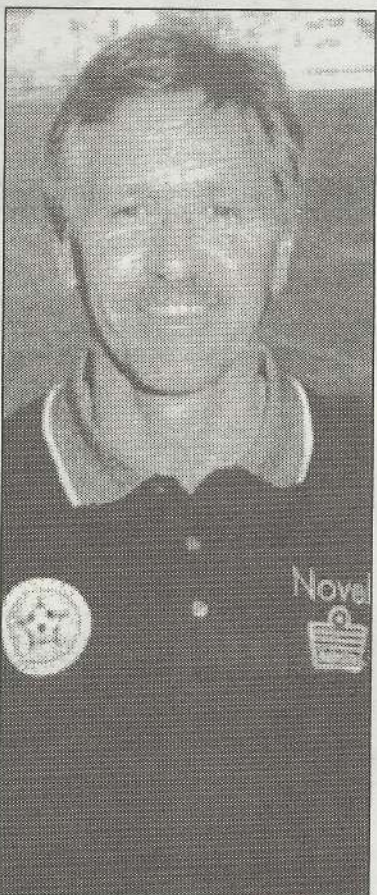
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SERMANNI DUMPS COSMOS FOR FEMALES

By Graham Cooke



Tom Sermanni: Bound for the US women's league.

Tom Sermanni's decision to quit after more than two years with the Cosmos took the Canberra public by surprise. He will leave this week to take up the position of assistant coach at the Bay Area CyberRays who will be competing in the newly formed United States Women's Professional League. While interview formalities still have to be completed, sources indicated the job is his.

At the CyberRays, based in San Jose, south of San Francisco, he will be working under Ian Sawyers who is the husband of the US women's captain, Julie Foudy. The team includes US internationals Brandi Chastain, Christie Welsh and Tisha Venturini. Also on the staff is former Australian captain Julie Murray who played under Sermanni when he was the national women's coach in the mid-1990s.

He said his initial reaction to the offer had been negative. 'But Ian kept on at me and I realised the job would give me some security at an important time of my life,' he said.

'It is also a major challenge and the league is an exciting venture which

will break new ground in women's soccer. The best players in the world are flocking to play there.

'I talked it over with [wife] Alison and we decided we should take the plunge.'

He described the appointment of Milovanovic as 'brilliant Mike and I coached at the AIS together for a time. He is the right man to take the club on from here.'

CANBERRA-BORN MILAN IS COSMOS' NEW BOSS

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni resigned and his successor was appointed during three days of frenetic activity at the National Soccer League club last week.

The new team boss will be Mike Milan Milovanovic, former assistant coach at the Australian Institute of Sport, who currently heads the soccer program at the ACT Academy of Sport.

At the press conference announcing his appointment, Milovanovic, who described himself as 'a Canberra boy through and through', revealed he had long coveted the Cosmos position. 'I was in the running for it once before, but it didn't eventuate,' he said.

'All this has happened so quickly and I know that following Tom, I will have big shoes to fill. He and Tony Brennan and Harry Wardell have brought respectability back the club. I see my role as taking it from there, moving on to challenge for a top six position and eventually to win a championship.'

'This will be the first NSL club I have coached. I don't see that as a great problem. I have had a lot to do with senior players and I know the NSL.'

'I have had opportunities to go overseas, but turned them down because I always wanted to coach in Canberra. Now I have the chance.'

Milovanovic (40) was on Canberra City's books as a 16-year-old in the first season of the NSL in 1977, making his first team debut the following season. He had one season with Blacktown City in 1981, returning to Canberra in 1982, then moving north to Brisbane City in 1983, where he became captain and saw out his NSL career.

Moving back to the ACT in 1987 he had a spell as coach of ACT Premiership club Belconnen United before taking up his AIS position in 1994, finally taking charge of the ACT Academy of Sport soccer program last year.

'The AIS position is probably one of the best in world soccer,' he said. 'There's very little movement there and I didn't want to be an assistant coach until I was 60.'



Milovanovic at the press conference in Canberra announcing his appointment as Cosmos coach.

Cosmos chairman Danny Moulis said the club had originally drawn up a list of 14 possible replacements for Sermanni, contacted six and interviewed two; Milovanovic and Leon Gardikiotis, who played briefly for Canberra City in the NSW League in the 1980s.

'In the end we decided on Mike because of his long established Canberra connections,' he said.

'Mike is technically qualified, has had lots of success in the coaching of AIS teams and has been involved in international tours and tournaments with the institute, the Joeys and the Young Socceroos. He has a strong network in the Australian soccer community and overseas.'

Moulis stressed that international experience was an increasingly important asset for any coach in the NSL. 'Football is an international business and decisions are currently being made by FIFA which will result in strong alliances between European clubs and clubs in developing nations such as Australia,' he said.

'We need a coach who has developed a network of contacts and can use it to attract these international alliances to give us the credibility to develop our football business.'

In answer to a question he said Canberra was 'closer to forming such an alliance than we were at the beginning of this season'. He would not elaborate.

KING KEVO!

• Marconi youngster spearheads Australia's Oceania onslaught.

Marconi Stallions striker Kevu Gulesserian notched up his first international hat-trick and more — in Australia's fourth match of the OFC Qualifiers for the World Youth Cup, against host-nation, Cook Islands last week.

Gulesserian put away eight of the Young Socceroos' 13 goals' spree against the hapless Cook Islanders. This brought his total tally at the end of the Oceania group qualifiers to an amazing ten strikes at the end of five games. The goal haul easily made him the Young Socceroos leading striker throughout the qualifiers.

Greg Owens started Australia's scoring rout in the game against Cook Island, driving the ball home from a Michael Ferrante corner, with Joshua Kennedy notching his first for the tournament a minute later, again from a Ferrante corner.

The 23rd minute however signaled the start of Gulesserian's assault, the striker following through on an effort by Jade North, which was dropped by the Cook Islands keeper.

Ferrante got his name on the scoreboard in the 28th minute, with Kennedy adding his second a minute later, and Grant Last knocking in from close range to give the Young Socceroos a 6-nil lead at half-time.

The Gulesserian show resumed virtually on the whistle of the re-start, the young striker pouncing on a rebound for his second, and then notching up his hat-trick in the 60th minute.

Captain Ljubo Milicevic interrupted the flow in the 67th minute, climbing above the defence to head home a Luke Wilshire corner, before Gulesserian knocked in the final four goals, including three in the space of three minutes.

'Kevu was at the end of a lot of moves we were making, and he did his job well, being in the right place at the right time, although I believe he could have had three or four more,' said coach Ange Postecoglou after the game.



Kevu Gulesserian: Goal King.

U/20 SOCCEROOS TACKLE KIWIS FOR WORLD CUP TICKET

Australia will now face New Zealand over two legs for the opportunity to represent Oceania at the World Youth Cup in Argentina in June after the Young Socceroos won Group 2 of the Oceania Qualifiers for the World Youth Cup over the weekend in Cook Island.

The Australian Under-20s qualified by beating Vanuatu 4-0. While both teams went into Saturday's game undefeated,

the Australian attack, which had netted 42 goals before the game, proved too much for the Vanuatuan team.

Midfielder Michael Ferrante got the scoring under-way in the 18th minute, curling the ball around the keeper from just outside the area to give the Young Socceroos a 1-0 lead into the half-time break.

Nick Carle made it 2-0 in the 63rd minute, Ahmad Elrich extended the lead ten minutes later, with Greg Owens wrap-

ping up the scoring in the 80th minute, to give the Australian Under-20s a 4-0 victory, and passage through to the next phase of qualification.

'Vanuatu was a good side and a tough test, although in saying that, we did win fairly comfortably in the end,' said coach Ange Postecoglou after the game.

'We played pretty well, especially in the second half, where we scored three and could have scored three or four

more, but overall, looking at the tournament I couldn't be happier, we couldn't have done too much more, we won the Fair Play Award, and it's been great preparation for the next phase.

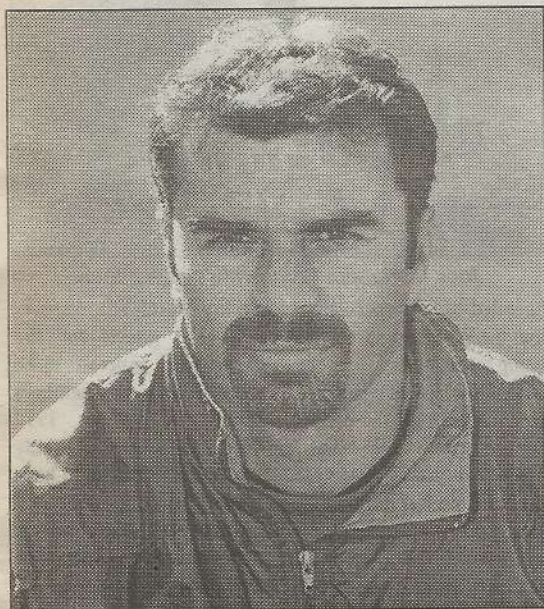
'New Zealand will be tough, and will be a step up from the opposition that we've faced here, so we'll need to step up to a higher level, but on our performances so far, I believe the signs are very good for us.' Postecoglou concluded.

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

AUSTRALIA's Youth team won Group 2 of the Oceania Qualifiers to remain undefeated in Phase 1 when last Saturday they downed Vanuatu, (also previously undefeated), 4-0, in the Cooke Islands. Australia now faces its last hurdle this week, a two

legged Final affair against New Zealand, winners of their Group 1.

The first leg will be played tomorrow, (Wednesday), in Auckland at North Harbour at 5.30pm, (a.e.s.t.), with the second leg played on Sunday, (March 4th), at



Angie Postecoglou: Australia's Youth team coach.



Bobby Despotovski scores from the penalty spot to register the first goal for Perth Glory in their 2-1 win over Eastern Pride.

the International Sports Centre in Coffs Harbour on the central coast of NSW, at 7 pm (a.e.s.t.).

The ultimate winner will become Oceania Youth Champions and march into the FIFA World Youth Cup Finals in June that will be staged in Argentina.

●●●●

MICKEY HICKMAN, the Northern Spirit's new Head coach, is slowly starting to smile.

Having taken over a spiritless Spirit three weeks ago, 'Hickey' has won the last two matches out of the three that he's been in full command.

And that's after the Spirit had previously reeled off five

consecutive losses.

Last Friday night Hickman steered the Spirit to its second straight win with a solid 2-4 victory over Newcastle United at the Marathon Stadium to collect another three, until recently, rare and most valuable League points.

This Sunday, at 5 pm, the Spirit are back at home,



By John Economos

(North Sydney Oval), against visitors, Adelaide City.

'Hickey' today, still remains as the only man to have won an NSL Championship, (1990), in the 24 year history of Sydney Olympic.



Mickey Hickman: Slowly starting to smile.



By Bert van Bedat

National coach Frank Farina has received a mixed reception for his choice of Socceroos to play Colombia at the Nemecio Camacho stadium in Bogota in an international friendly on Thursday Australian time.

Of the squad of 18 players, eleven are of national league teams. The seven overseas players are more or less fringe dwellers. The top guns are missing.

Leeds United stars Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell won't be showing their high wire act at high altitude. Captain Paul Okon, veteran World Cup qualifier Stan Lazaridis, goal scorer Paul Agostino, goal keepers Mark Bosnich and Mark Schwarzer as well as Manchester City's Danny Tiatto, also are among the absentees.

Farina has been castigated for not trying more of his first choice players for the match, which is against Australia's possible final opponent in its bid to qualify for the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea.

Australia will need to play off against the fifth best South American nation and Colombia is a potential candidate, together with Ecuador and Uruguay.

Farina's argument is he wishes to try out more of the locals to build a more experienced squad. He believes the Colombia match is the ideal situation to trial his core of players against quality opposition in a pressure situation for the qualifying matches, which will feature mostly NSL players.

Australia will need to rely on local players during its group matches in April against the Oceania nations of Samoa, Tonga, American Samoa and Fiji.

If it wins its group phase, it plays the winner of the other Oceania group (most possibly

New Zealand) on a home-and-away basis in June to earn the eventual right to play off for world cup qualification.

"In the first (and second) phase, this (local players with a few overseas based players) will be the nucleus of the squad," he said.

Farina was sensitive to the criticism of not picking his major force and going to the Americas.

"These are the same people who are critical when we play so many games in Europe, where many of our top players are based. These are the same people saying we should be playing South American teams. And when we finally do (play in South America) they're still complaining," Farina said.

"The squad has been selected on merit. I've always said there's going to be a group of around 35 players to select from. Some might have to come into the side under difficult circumstances. With friendly games like this, they'll have gained some experience and will more likely be successful.



Clint Bolton: Sydney Olympic goalkeeper.

"Playing Colombia is pivotal to our campaign. As a potential opponent in November, it will give

us a good indication of what will be required when the time comes," he said.

Australia is more than likely to be successful in the first phase with the help of Australia's top NSL players. Giving them the opportunity to taste the South American flavor will add experience to the squad.

However, in November when the ultimate (home-and-away) qualifier stands between Australia and the final spot in 2002 World Cup, Farina more than likely is going to rely on the overseas stars to get Australia across the line.

Then there will be few critics denying Farina the choice of the cream of Australia's overseas based players. However, Australia's only World Cup captain, Johnnie Warren articulated a silent resentment that has become a reality of Australia's growing involvement in world football.

"The local boys front up for the donkey games, while the overseas boys get the glamor games," he

said on SBS's On the Ball last Sunday.

The match will be shown live on pay-tv stations, C7 and Austar, on Thursday, 12 midday.

AUSTRALIA'S SQUAD IN COLOMBIA

BOLTON	Clint
PETKOVIC	Michael
BLATIS	Con
COLOSIMO	Simon
COSTANZO	Angelo
DE AMICIS	Fausto
HORVAT	Steve
LAYBUTT	Stephen
MILLER	Scott
BURNS	Jacob
CASSERLY	Luke
CHIPPERFIELD	Scott
CORICA	Steve
VIDMAR	Aurelio
WEHRMAN	Kasey
ALOISI	John
THOMPSON	Archie
ZDRILIC	David

SPIRITS VISIT WOLVES' LAIR

By John Economos

The Wollongong Wolves tonight, (Tuesday), play the first of their two games they have in hand, when they meet the Northern Spirit at the WIN Stadium at 7.30pm.

Both teams come off valuable away wins from last weekend with the home team down-

ing Brisbane 2-4 and the Spirit winning by the identical scoreline against Newcastle United.

But for this important match the Wolves will be taking the pitch without two of their regular star strikers. Scott Chipperfield is over in Colombia on national duty with Frank Farina's squad, whilst Saso Petrovski misses this game serving a suspension.

Wollongong's coach Ron

Corry stated last night: "We will be without two of our strikers in Petrovski and Chipperfield, but that's life and you have to learn to live without them sometime."

"I envisage bringing in Dino Mennillo on the left side of our attack and have a couple of options for Petrovski's position. Paul Harries could be one way to go, but I haven't made up my mind as yet," said Corry.

Corry went on to warn: "The Spirit under their new coach Mickey Hickman have already had a couple of good results and they seem to have found a new lease of life and a change of attitude under him. That makes them dangerous."

Newly signed goalkeeper, Dean Anastasiadis from the now defunct Carlton, is another possible new selection that could come into the team.

Grant Barlow 'kept wickets' up in Brisbane last Saturday night, but Corry could be tempted to soon give Anastasiadis plenty of games in the months ahead leading to Spain where Wollongong as Champions of Oceania, has qualified for the World Club Championships.

An interesting feature of tonight's game is the possible duel between Wollongong's tenacious central marker George Souris as he endeavours to collar the Spirit's towering teenage striker, Ben Burgess.

SOCCER TONIGHT

Tuesday, 27th February

Wollongong Wolves

Northern Spirit

WIN Stadium

Kick-Off 7.30pm

email: wolves@1earth.net

website: www.wollongongwolves.com.au

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

THE BRISBANE STRIKERS last Saturday and Sunday attended the unveiling of Brisbane's brand new Children's Hospital in a sneak preview.

The preview was run in conjunction with South Bank from 10 am till 3pm on Saturday and from noon till 2 pm on Sunday.

The Public Relations Officer for the Mater Hospital, Ms Miranda Hunt, stated: "The Hospital envisaged that 3,000 odd people attended for a sneak preview of the new Mater Children's Hospital and enjoyed a carnival atmosphere from a range of festivities throughout the day.

"It was a fantastic day that created community awareness in preparation for our May official Opening," ended Ms Hunt.

Players from the Strikers attended, including skipper Stuart McLaren.

McLaren stated that this was not the only event that the Strikers have attended.

"We make an effort to attend around 200 events per season for community relations," said McLaren.



b) "Fixed Series Tickets". This series extends to the fan a guaranteed ticket to all purchased rounds of the final competition, including the Final match, regardless whether his or her chosen team progresses from round to round.

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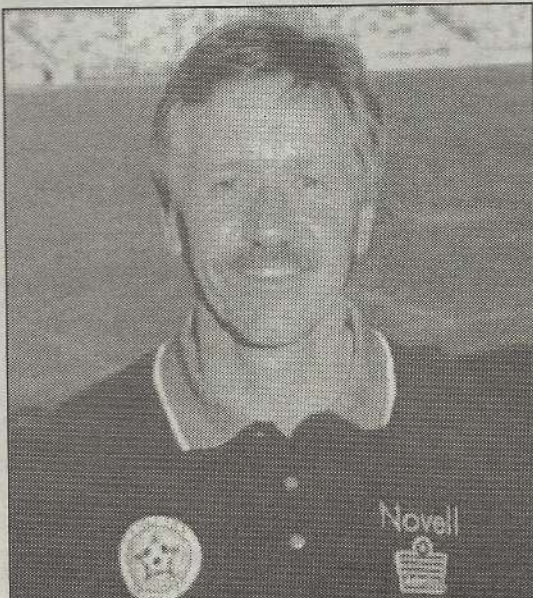
tion and team-building skills since he arrived here.

"I know all of Canberra will join with us in wishing tom the best."

Canberra has appointed former Australian World Youth left fullback, Mike ('Milo') Milovanovic, as



By John Economos



Tommy Sermanni: Canberra Cosmos' forever smiling coach.

Sermanni's successor.

Milovanovic played in the NSL as a strapping 18 year old when the Canberra Arrows entered the League.

'Milo' and Canberra's current Chairman, Moulis, were the twin fullbacks for the Arrows from 1978, under the then coach, Johnny Warren.

Meanwhile it's understood that Sermanni after his trip to Scotland will then move to the USA where he has been offered a coaching position.

Sermanni has been offered a job there to coach the new Women's team, San Jose, California in the new Professional League.

BRETT EMERTON, former Sydney Olympic's attacking right midfielder and captain of the last Australian Olympic Games team, celebrated his 22nd birthday last Thursday with his Dutch first division side, Feyenoord.



Jose Luis Chilavert: Rocky future at Strasbourg.

The strapping right-wing-back quickly but wisely invested most of his lucrative contract money he received from Feyenoord to purchase a large block of flats in the Sydney Eastern suburb of Bondi Beach.

JOSE LUIS CHILAVERT, Paraguay's most flamboyant World Cup goalscoring goalkeeper has rocked France since his arrival at Strasbourg.

Transferred mid season from Velez Sarsfield, the hugely extroverted Chilavert soon found himself out of favour and was commissioned to the bench.

The verbose South American didn't take too kindly to his demotion by new coach Yvon Pouliquen and flatly refused to be tagged as a substitute.

Smokin Jose was duly heftily fined for his antagonism and his now frail French football future must be questionable.

THE RUFER brothers, (Shane and Wynton), co-coaches of the Auckland based team the Kingz, are being challenged for their positions with the Kiwi NSL team by former New Zealand World Cup coach, Kevin Fallon.



Jock Morlando: Balgownie's new coach.

have led to wild speculation that the Rufers' positions are being threatened.

Both Rufers are contracted to the Kingz till the end of the season.

Wynton, the 37 year old sensational marksman, holds the dual position of Player/coach with the team whilst Shane, the eldest brother, and a former international midfielder, handles the technical side of the Kingz.

Friday March 9th.

Special guests for the evening are expected to be three prominent members of the Australian 1974 World Cup team, the only senior team to date to have made it to the Finals.

Balgownie's new coach is none other than former Wollongong Wolves' great, Jock Morlando.



Bobby Despotovski: The Glory's glorious striker.

BALGOWNIE SOCCER CLUB will stage its new season launch in the Illawarra Soccer League on

BOBBY DESPOTOVS, BKI, Perth Glory's intelligent striker, felt some traces of nostalgia last Saturday night when he faced the Eastern Pride at Perth Oval.

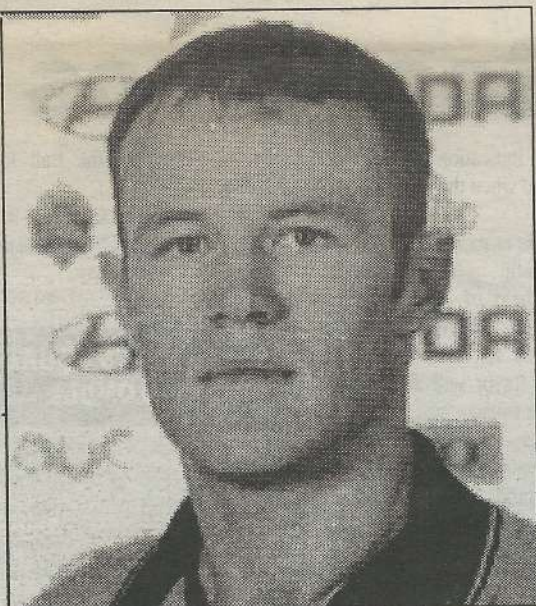
For it was the Eastern Pride, (then known as the Morwell Falcons), that Despotovski kicked off his career with in the NSL.

Now with 12 goals to his name so far this season, the 29 year old Despotovski has become the first player in Glory's short history to have hit more than 50 goals for the Western Australian Club.

Nostalgic feelings however didn't stop Bobby from coring last Saturday night against the Eastern Pride at Perth Glory.

The Glory beat the Pride 2-1.

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Stuart McLaren: The Strikers' captain.

WORLD CUP 2002 tickets went on sale last week with FIFA having devised a new type of ticket for fans around the globe.

The new 'Team Specific Tickets' (TST), give the fans the opportunity to buy tickets to see their team all the way through to the Final should that team ultimately qualifies.

The 2002 World Cup finals blast off on May 30th through to the Final on June 30th to be staged jointly in Japan and Korea.

There are two types of Team Specific Tickets.

a) "Conditional Series Tickets". This series of tickets gives the fan access to tickets in the FIFA World Cup final competition until his or hers team is eliminated.

It's with much sadness that we have to report that Canberra Cosmos' ultra honest and highly amicable coach, Tommy Sermanni, will part company with the team from the national capital.

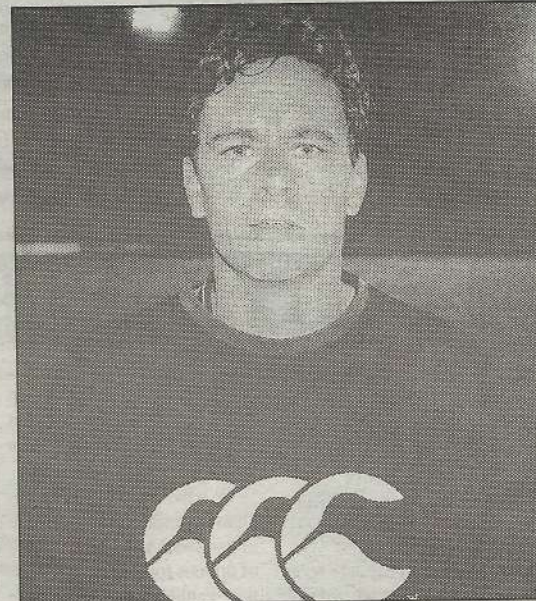
Appointed back in December 1998, Sermanni now finds that he must return to his parents in Scotland as soon as possible.

Smiling Sermanni took charge of Canberra for the last time last Saturday at the Bruce Stadium in the home clash against the Parramatta Power.

Canberra's Chairman and the Club's former international right fullback, Danny Moulis, stated last week: "We at Canberra pay great tribute to Tommy's work, dedica-



Brett Emerton: At 22 years a pro footballer and now Real Estate investor.



Wynton Rufer: The Kingz' current coach and former New Zealand World Cup dynamic striker.

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

STEVE DARBY is a name that hasn't been seen or heard about for quite a long time.

Well the former Director of coaching of both Tasmania and the ACT, later to become the General manager of Sydney Olympic, took off two years ago for Malaysia where he not only won promotion for his Club Johore into the First division, but went on to win the Malaysian Cup final 1-0 over Sabah with the sole goalscorer being the Parramatta Power's playmaker, Milan Blagojevic.

Well 'Darbs' is no longer in Malaysia.

Would you believe he's currently based in Vietnam?

'Darbs' is coaching Vietnam's Under 20s national team as well as coaches from the V-League.

will also transmit this telecast Live.

Commentators for the telecast will be Michael Cockerill and Paul Wade.

Full replays will be screened on C-7 (Pay t.v.) this Thursday at 10.30pm as well as on Saturday (3rd March) at 12.30am.

Soccer Australia will provide a minute-by-minute Live Match Update on its website: www.socceraustralia.com.au from midday Thursday 1st March.

The Australian team, (Sydney based players), plus coaches Frank Farina and Graham Arnold, flew out of Sydney last Sunday morning.

SPEAKING of Soccer's coverage by the Australian electronic media, it continues to be nothing short of disgraceful.

It happened yet again for

We kicked off with the Station's 10 pm News time slot and got no Soccer.

The 11 pm, 12 am, 1 am and finally the 2 am, still there were no NSL results broadcast.

Yet what we did get was Basketball results, the Cricket, (India vs Australia—Not a Test Match by the way), but no bloody Soccer.

In the indelible words of the Late Professor Julius Sumner Miller: "Why should this be so? Still?"

Yet we have employed,



no less than FOUR people 'Fulltime' by Soccer Australia's so-called "Media Department".

Have these people been monitoring, or policing, such a disgraceful result-service by the major radio networks?

If so, why haven't they followed it up?

And hard.

Soccer deserves what it gets, and it's getting worse.

Until we get passionate, diligent, fully experienced and hard-ball-playing real Soccer people involved in our administration at national level, Soccer will always cop pathetic treatment by the media. Professionalism is non-existent.

Wake up Soccer Australia.

You are employed to SERVE the code to the very best of your capacity.

The 'Chief Guns' of the A.R.U., AFL and NRL would NEVER tolerate such sick treatment by the electronic media.

IS THERE anyone out there, (in Sydney that is), that may be able to answer 'Good Oil' a very simple, (but highly intriguing), question.

Please be warned.

This is a most genuine and serious question.

Since last Christmas, there has been a strange group of six, (sometimes up to nine), players, that have been spotted playing Soccer at a local park, (Algie Park), in the inner western Sydney suburb of Haberfield.

Who are these lunatic blokes?

What's so strange, (you may well ask), about a group of nice-type blokes having a friendly kick-around?

Actually, not strange at all.

In fact it's great as well as healthy.



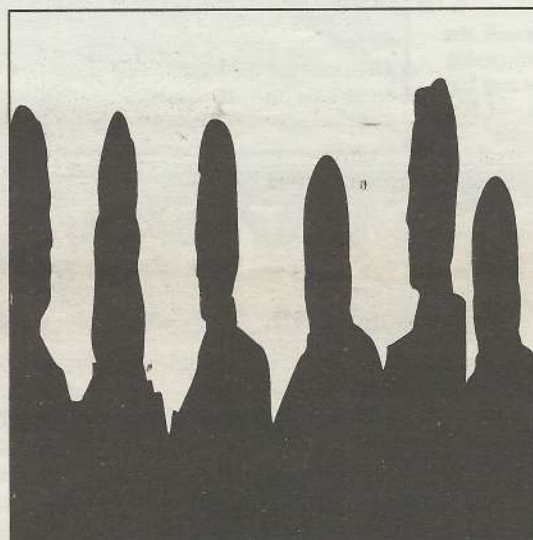
By John Economos

What 'Good Oil' would very keenly like to ascertain, is, the kick off time?

Would you believe that these crazy blokes, (whoever they are), have been spotted, (and on numerous occasions), playing Soccer, ALWAYS at around 3am—the very latest around 3.45am?

'Good Oil' has already checked with the Milk Board in Sydney that has strongly assured this column that these blokes are certainly not any of their milkmen.

If these blokes need a name for their 'team', 'Good Oil' would sincerely suggest 'Insomniacs United'.



Who are these guys that play Soccer mid-week at Algie Park, Haberfield. NSW at 3.30am??

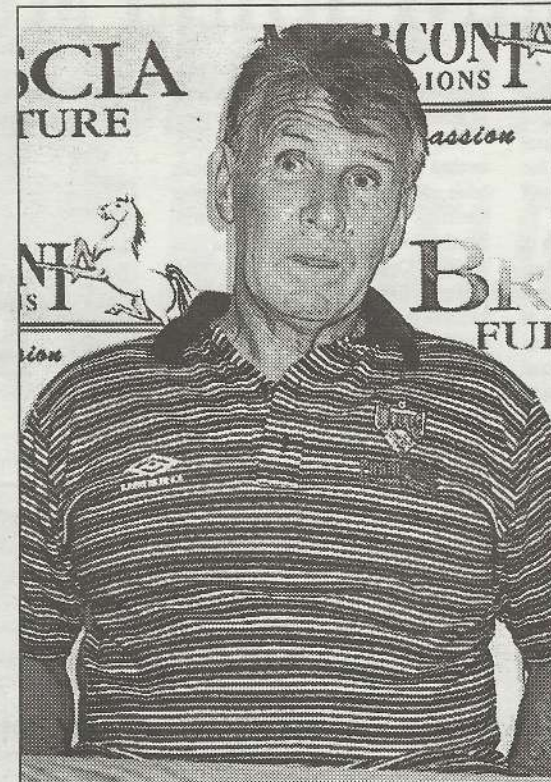
RONNIE CORRY, the Wollongong Wolves' NSL coach, last week agreed to extended terms to sign up for another year.

This latest news has pleased not only the Wolves' players immensely, let alone the Board Of Directors of the Club, but the loyal and rapidly growing supporters of the team.

The former Australian World Cup goalkeeper has done a most sterling job since taking over the senior coaching reins of the Wolves during the off season.

Despite the Wollongong having lost four key players from last season's Grand Final and League championship winning squad, the courageous Corry was still able to retain full balance and momentum for Wollongong.

In fact not only was Corry able to win the Oceania Club Championship last month under hectic and most gruelling conditions in Port



Ronnie Corry: In hot pursuit of League leaders, South Melbourne.

later of the firm belief that had it not been for the referee's very poor performance, his team would have had a real chance of winning.

Fine.

But much later, (the same evening), that same coach's assistant, was heard to remark:

"We were lucky tonight that we didn't cop a much heavier hiding."

How much of a variance is that in opinions?



Archie Thompson: Marconi's flyer in hot pursuit of Mori.

180 degrees would not be an inaccurate reading, would it?

VODAPHONE injected multi million dollars into a massive sponsorship last year into Rugby Union that left the Wallabies flying high in the line-outs.



Australia's No 1 telephony carrier, Telstra, (and a shareholder's nightmare to date), could, in the near future, come into Soccer in a big way.

Standby for a call.

ARCHIE THOMPSON, Marconi's explosive paced flank-striker, nailed in another two goals last Saturday night against the visiting Sydney United.

This latest brace of goals has now lifted the pacy marksman's season tally to 12, and now Thompson is in hot pursuit to overtake the League's top goalscorer from the Perth Glory, Damian Mori who has 13 goals to his name.



Steve Darby: Currently coaching in Vietnam.

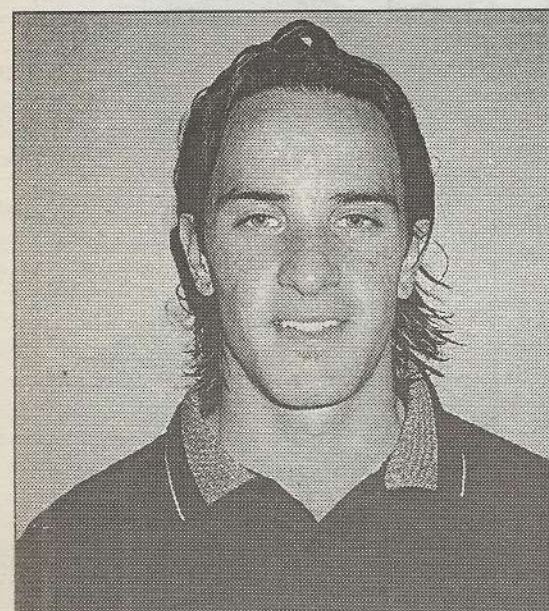
THE SEVEN NETWORK, (via its Cable arm, C-7 Sport Channel 12), this Thursday, March 1st, at 12 midday till 2 pm, will telecast LIVE, (would you believe?), the friendly international clash between Colombia and Australia, direct from the capital, Bogota.

'Austar' (on Channel 20),

the elebenteenth time last Friday would you believe?

Last Friday evening, no less than five important NSL matches were played.

Yet a major radio network in NSW, (with TWO Stations), which takes great pride in its News Service, failed to broadcast one single result on its hourly bulletin news service. Not one single result.



Angelo Costanzo: Marconi's midfielder making his debut for Australia.

SOCCER WOMAN

BY JANENE MAR

SERMANNI JOINS MURRAY IN US

A second Aussie will join striker Julie Murray at the Bay Area CyberRays for the inaugural WUSA professional league season, but this time, the Matildas connection will not be out there on the pitch.

Tom Sermanni, erstwhile head coach of men's NSL outfit Canberra Cosmos, unexpectedly announced last Tuesday his return to women's soccer in taking on the role of CyberRays' Assistant Coach. Sermanni was the Matildas' first full-time National Coach, holding that position from 1994 to 1996, and led the Australians to their first World Cup appearance.

Sermanni will work under Head Coach Ian Sawyers, husband of US co-captain Julie Foudy who will be playing for the San Diego Spirit. His appointment is yet to be announced by the club itself, Sermanni flying out today (Tue) to complete interview formalities in order that the deal be finalised.

There will be little settling-in time for Sermanni, all the players assembling by today to then get stuck into pre-season training in readiness for the 14 April kick-off. Sawyers' process of appointing staff has occurred later than the remainder of the coaches, himself only appointed to the top job after the original candidate changed his mind a matter of days before the two-day player draft in early December.

Sermanni was earlier approached by WUSA outfit New York Power, but negotiations ended up falling through. For a 'foreign' coach to be appointed in a nation so

enamoured by women's soccer is certainly an achievement for Sermanni.

The prospect of coaching in the long-awaited American pro-league obviously holds great attraction, particularly being involved from its inaugural kickoff. Scottish-born Sermanni, who was also Assistant Coach at men's J-League club Sanfrecce Hiroshima in Japan (the job for which he left the Matildas) now relishes the thought of working day-in day-out with some of the world's best female footballers.

Similarly, Sermanni first came into the women's game at a most exciting time back in mid-1994 when he took charge of the reins. It was the boom time for the sport, having been named as an Olympic sport just months before. With that came the unprecedented injection of government funds to the game here, and Sermanni was to lead the direction of bringing the Australians remotely close to the professionalism already long being practised by the Americans and Europeans.

Murray and Sermanni last worked together during the 1995 World Cup and the US Women's Cup held the following month. When squad selections were next announced by Sermanni, moving into a new phase, captain Murray's name was not among them. Today Murray doesn't hold any grudges.

"It's great," said Murray last week after hearing the news. "He knows my capabilities, and I know what to expect from him. He'll work very well with Ian — I think they'll be a pretty good combination."



Julie Murray



Tom Sermanni

Nigerian League attracts Foreign stars

Nigeria's women's league has signed 'foreign' players for the first time.

Two members of Ghana's National Team the 'Black Queens' — goalkeeper Memunatu Suleimanu and defender Elizabeth Baidoo — plus Cameroon national keeper Nene Lucy Agoh have joined what is considered the best-organised domestic league in Africa.

The move signifies a new era for the women's game in Nigeria and Africa alike and will hopefully help to continue the continent's recent rise in world football.

Today the Nigerian league is in effect semi-professional, something unheard of not that long ago. Players are paid between US\$50 and 200 per month, considered a relatively decent salary in that part of the world.

The Ghanaian pair will wear the colours of defending champions Pelican Stars, based in Calabar.

Both players competed in the last World Cup, as well as the 1998 and 2000 African Championships. Cameroon's Agoh joins Inneh Queens Benin City, after making a name for herself at the last African Championships.

Brisbane, South clash shifted over players' shortage

By Glenn Davis

Soccer Australia has granted Brisbane Strikers permission to postpone their clash with leaders South Melbourne at Ballymore next Sunday.

The Strikers did the right thing by the public by playing their last two matches without four of their young players who've been called up for national duties.

Under SA rules, the Strikers could have sought postponements for the last two matches but Strikers' coach

John Kosmina elected to go ahead with the games despite his side being riddled with injuries and suspension.

The Strikers were down at least eight players from their regular squad against Wollongong Wolves last Friday but further injuries and the suspension of Nick Meredith has forced Kosmina's hand not to play South Melbourne.

"I've got four players away in the Cook Islands, four or five are out injured and now a suspension," Kosmina said.

"We could have called off the Parramatta game two rounds ago under Soccer Australia rules, but we did the right thing by them and carried on."

"But we also have an obligation to the public and we just haven't got the bodies. I can't throw a whole bunch of QAS kids in against South Melbourne."

The Strikers have three players on World Youth duties in the Cook Islands — Wayne Shoj, Jade North and Jon McKain — while Shane Smeltz is representing New Zealand.



Wayne Shoj: Brisbane's absentee striker.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

EVEN when over 10,000 turned up for the match against Adelaide City year ago no one had to endure a lengthy delays like at WIN Stadium recently.

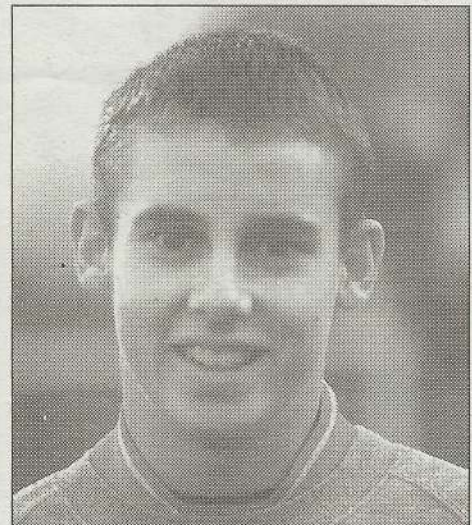
Three "old ladies" (no offence intended please) Florence, Joan and Jan used to handle all admittance quick and smart at Brandon Park. It took more than one minute unlike WIN Stadium to proceed with tickets.

Must be modern technology slowing transactions down or pure incompetence on behalf of the Trust handling the Stadiums organisation. Lets hope they learn and speed things up.

SWEPPER Ben Blake, despite his young age and coming from State League a couple of years ago has been consistent from this year, keeping regulars like David Cervinski out of the starting line-up.

The young sweeper earned praise from his coach, and the fans have voted him the player of the season so far.

LUKE Wilkshire, a former local player with Lysaghts Soccer club, before joining English Premier Club Middlesbrough, played a leading role in



Luke Wilkshire: Wollongong local lad making waves in Young Socceroos.

Australia's winning start at the World Youth Cup qualification tournament last week in the Cook Islands.

He scored two goals in his first appearance against Samoa.

POWERFUL Leagues club Parramatta is rumoured to become the first grand sporting organisation in Australia. This ideology not being embraced by certain clubs because they believe they belong to the "greatest game".

The plan takes in the present rugby league team, the Parramatta Soccer club, and if granted, a new super 12 rugby union side all under one head coach.

In Europe famous football clubs also cater for other codes like athletics, gymnastics, handball, e.g. Barcelona, swimming, basketball, etc. under the one organisation.

Sub-committees are appointed to run the individual sports.

A huge number of clubs members support the concept. Time will tell if this plan comes to anything at all. Hopefully it is not just a "pie in the sky," and perhaps something tangible to be picked up by other big leagues or Workers clubs. The Wolves could do with a "millionaires club" supporting their progress.

WOLLONGONG WOLVES are going well at present and coach Ron Corry has his hands full to keep the boys in check and not carried away with success. The aim is to do well in the final run and finish in the top two or three if winning the minor premiership is not possible. It is important for the team to focused and sensible, working as a group of friends and the sky is the limit.

THE Wolves annual golf day was a great success, fully sponsored and attended by over 160 players. The golf day champion trophy went to striker Scott Chipperfield and Robbie Stanton, while their group won the gross score award.

David Cervinski controversially claimed the longest range award even when he was the only one who knew where the marker was.

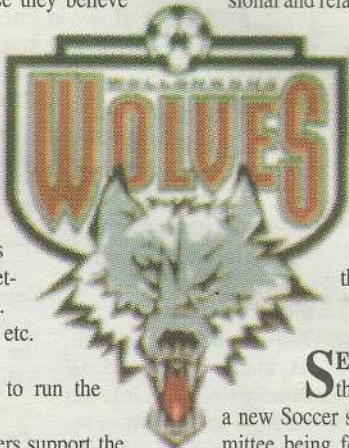
Nearest to the pin hole award, originally claimed by the comic George Souris who led others to believe he scored impossible hole in ones, was eventually won by young Jay Lucas.

IT was announced that coach Ron Corry signed up for another season and chairman Joe Cachia said his board was pleased with that decision. Ron is a professional and relates well to the players. He will have

a say in up-coming player contracts, and which players he can keep or release.

Two young promising strikers in Paul Harris and Jay Lucas are back in training after overcoming injuries and hope for a run in top grade soon.

Their chance will come when the heavy programme of the Wolves eventual takes it's toll.



SECRETARY Ron Brindle stated that the Warilla Juniors are all set for

a new Soccer season with a strong working committee being formed and financial backing from Warilla Sporties club.

Registrations of all ages continue and the club is looking forward to meeting parents in the coming season. Training days are Tuesdays and Thursday at Morley Park, commencing early March on three fields from 4pm.

Despite earlier difficulties, the Junior Soccer club continues with renewed vigour and solid financial backing.

NEW coach John Houston is building the first girls Soccer team for the Kiama Soccer club, inviting interested girls to join training on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Kiama Leisure Centre. The Kiama senior Soccer club is fully supporting the new girls side.

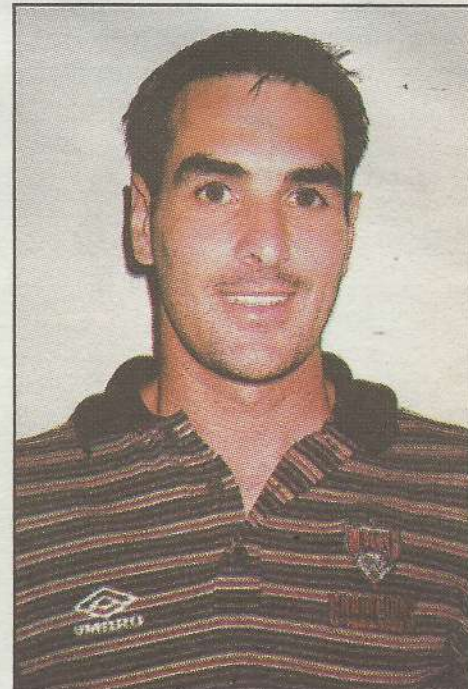
ON Sunday 4th March Shellharbour City Council calls on Community organisations to come to the 'party' and do their bit. Shellharbour City Soccer club is planning to bring together senior players and club members to run a 'clean-up-day' around the Keith Bond Oval, and surroundings to fill plenty of bags

supplied by the Council.

Club supporters are also welcome and should report to the ground officials early in the morning, see club secretary Craig Hannan.

THE Next General Meeting is called for Wednesday 21st March. Annual Gala day is scheduled Kiama Leisure Centre on the weekend Saturday 7th April and Sunday 8th April.

Corrimal Leagues club Knock-out latest results: Fernhill - Port Kembla Amateurs 1-1, Wollongong Olympic - Kemblawarra 0-0, Albion Park WE - Shoalhaven 1-1, Highlands - Berkeley 0-2, Consiston Lions - Port Kembla 0-5, Tarrawanna - Kiama 4-2, South Coast - Balgownie Rangers 0-1, Corrimal Rangers - Warrilla wanderers 1-1, Bulli - Western Suburbs 0-1, Bellambi - Dapto 2-0, Woonona - Lysaghts 0-4, Barbarians - Illawarra United 0-3, Ruse - St Elias 1-4, Cringila - Northern United 0-0, Shellharbour City - Picton Rangers 0-4, University - Helensburgh 0-1.



Robbie Stanton: A winner on the golf course.

Wolves Promote Talent, On & Off The Field

By John Economos

Sam Taylor first came to the attention of the Wollongong Wolves and many in the Illawarra region through his televised spots promoting donations to the 'Guide Dog Association of NSW'.

Five years ago Sam did his work experience on Wollongong's Community Radio Station 2VOXFM where he instantly won the hearts of the Station's listeners with his on-air presentations.

It immediately became most obvious to one and all that young Sam was an audio man, most gifted with a great alto voice.

Now a HSC graduate from the St Andrews College up in Sydney, Sam has commenced

his Degree in Arts at the University of NSW.

It was whilst Sam was studying music on the Eighth Floor at St Andrews College that he teamed up with the young group — 'Level 8'.

The Leader of Level 8, Chris Steindlberger, said of Sam:

"So what that he is totally blind.

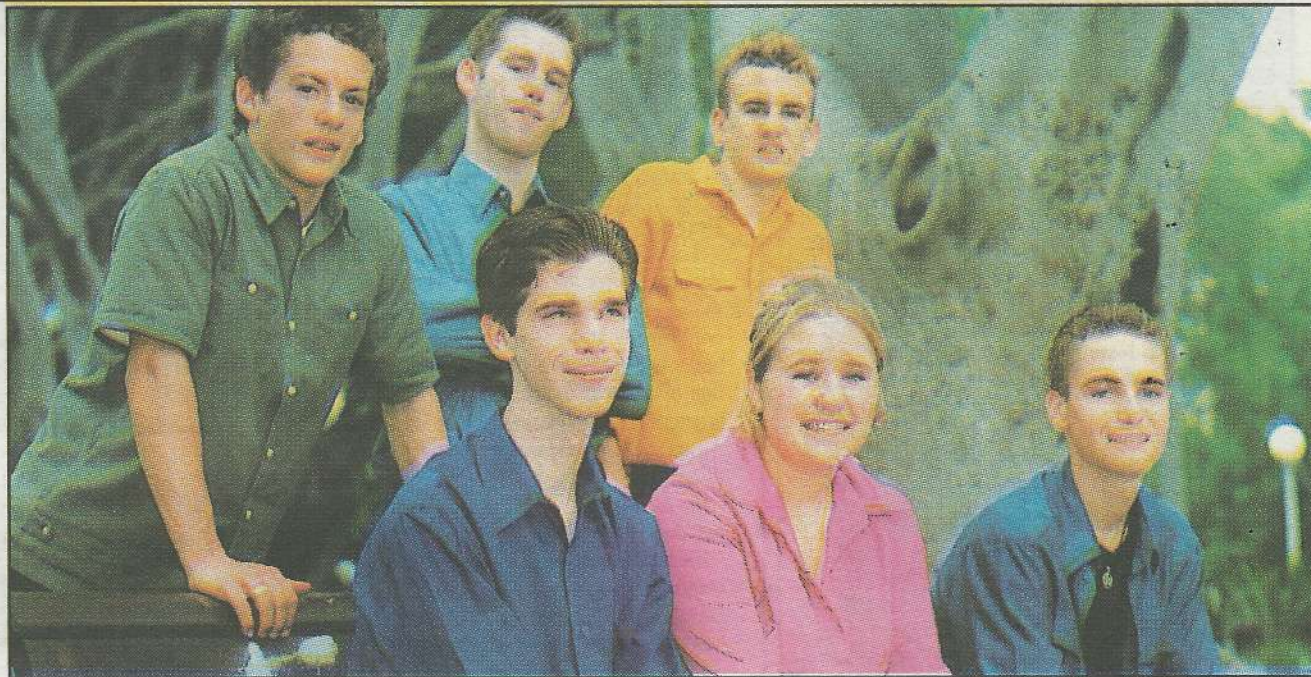
"It's the voice that counts."

Indeed all Wollongong supporters will be keen to see Sam and the 'Level 8' group at the Wolves' home game this Friday night against the Parramatta Power, at 7.30 pm.

But you can forget the alto voice.

Sam today has already matured into a Bass-baritone.

Be at the WIN Stadium this Friday night to see this outstanding young talent.



Back Row (L-R): Toby Shaln, Andrew Willcocks, Sam McNeill. Front Row (L-R): Sam Taylor, Kate Blanch, Chris Steindlberger.

Wolves Looking for Power

By John Economos

Wollongong Wolves this Friday night will line-up against a rejuvenated Parramatta Power at the WIN Stadium in a clash where victory is most vital to both sides.

Both teams had valuable away-wins last week-end with Wollongong downing the Brisbane Strikers 2-4 whilst the Power accounted for the Canberra

Cosmos 0-1.

A win for Wollongong will keep them well on target for their hopes to eventually leap-frog South Melbourne and into first position on the League ladder.

The Parramatta Power last Saturday night nailed their first win—(0-1 over Canberra Cosmos), after a horrific streak of losses that yielded the Sydney side one solitary League point from their last six outings.

In contrast Wollongong has remained undefeated since return-

ing to Australia last month as Champions of Oceania and sit in second spot on the League, four points behind leaders South Melbourne but have two matches in hand.

Wollongong's coach Ronnie Corry stated to ABSW last night: "The Power I see is starting to promote some of their young blokes up there and they will have a point or two to prove to their coach (Mitchell).

"So I fully expect them to come at us," Corry predicted.

Despite not having star goalscorer Scott Chipperfield, (away with the Australian team to Colombia), Corry was almost unperturbed.

"I have plenty of back-up power with many of the kids we have in the reserves.

"We'll have Saso Petrovski back from serving his suspension after missing Tuesday's (tonight), match against the Spirit, plus Dino Mennillo, Robbie Stanton David Cervinski, Jay Lucas, Max Nicholson and 21 year old striker

Paul Harries, a local lad that's been in England for sometime," Corry explained.

Meanwhile the Parramatta



Ron Corry: Wollongong's coach.

Power is again expected to be without their ace-striker, Joe Miller who missed the Canberra match last Saturday through an inflamed knee.

Miller is the Power's top goalscorer with nine targets to his name this season.

David Mitchell, the Power's coach, was most complimentary to Corry's team when he stated to ABSW last night: "Wollongong is one of the two best sides in the League and if it wins both of its deferred games, will leap into top spot in the competition. They have a real good team spirit going

for them.

"Without doubt it's a helluva good team. In fact I really rate them a better side than last season's and are most exciting to watch.

"We played solidly last Saturday against Canberra to get back on track.

"I was pleased with our 19 year old striker Luke Rogdenburg who linked up with Joel Griffiths in our attack and scored our goal as well in Canberra. I signed Luke up last year as an apprentice. He's tall, strong and an honest worker," ended Mitchell.

Wollongong Shows Gratitude

At the Wollongong Wolves' 'Welcome Back Dinner' held at the Fraternity Club last Tuesday week to salute their victorious team for winning the Oceania Club Championship, certain other people were also acknowledged for special, (and

unpaid), services rendered to the Team and Club.

Mr Phil Torpy, Johnny Warren (television), Jess Macchione (team manager), John Economos (ABSW's journalist), and George ('Crusher') Watson (team-trainer), were all presented with memento awards for special ser-

vices rendered during the Wollongong Wolves' gruelling crusade in Port Moresby at New Guinea.

The Wolves' Dinner attracted almost 400 guests that included special Guest of Honour, the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Mr George Harrison.



(L to R) Phil Torpy (Team official), Johnny Warren (television), Jess Macchione (Team manager), John Economos (ABSW's chief journalist), George ('Crusher') Watson (Team trainer). Background (on stage)-The Wollongong Wolves' General manager, Graeme Haney.

photo-By Steve Holland

CATO CONSTRUCTIONS
presents



Wollongong Wolves

versus

Parramatta Power

this Friday 2nd March at WIN Stadium

Main game kick off at 7.30pm, gates open at 4.30pm

OTHER ENTERTAINMENT

- Youth Grade vs Parramatta Power, kick off at 5pm.
- Rooball: Albion Park vs Woonona, Tarrawanna vs Oak Flats
- R&M Dance and Promotion Studio
- 'Level 8' Accapella • Wollongong Toyota Wolfchase
- Meet players after the match at the FRATERNITY CLUB, presentation at 10.00pm

SouthCOAST	WIN	SHANDERS HARDWARE	KITZ.net	BRICKLAYING	198	FRATERNITY
Game Tickets	Outer	Concourse	Grandstand			
Adult	\$12.00	\$14.00	\$16.00			
Concession	\$ 8.00	\$10.00	\$12.00			
Child (0-12)	\$ 0.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 4.00			

email: wolves@tearh.net

website: www.wollongongwolves.com.au

TACTICALLY FRANK

Dear Sir,

I, like many other Australians do not know what kind of game Frank Farina is playing if he intends to use half local and half overseas players for this Colombia match in Bogota.

He is either wasting the local players time as well as penalising their clubs or he has intentions of using local players in November to keep players like Damien Mori quite.

It's obvious that Damien Mori has hit a raw nerve with his outburst a few weeks ago even if he was right with his criticism, but you don't play your World Cup campaign trying to prove your critics wrong. Frank is either naive and sensitive to criticism, if he doesn't take the very best to Colombia, or he is the eternal optimist as well as a big gambler if he is going to use locals in November. Any other reason or excuse doesn't make any sense.

With over 100 players in Europe you could pick two full teams before a local got a look in, in case of injuries so what is the point of it all. Is it to prove Damien wrong? Is it to deflect any criticism if the team is beaten heavily, or is he really going to use locals in November? What ever it is, he should make his intentions known before he leaves with the squad. My guess is that it is a reward to keep local team morale high for the Oceania qualifiers in April where mostly locals are needed to do the job. However that loyalty is misguided if they are not needed in November against the fifth best South American side.

He should forget about what happened with Ned Zelic, and concentrate on getting Australia to Korea and Japan without pander-

ing to anyone. He has more than enough good top quality players in Europe to get us there, without Damien Mori and other locals distracting him. Frank does have a problem in trying to keep both sides happy.

He doesn't want an us versus them situation (locals versus overseas based) or division on his hands. The only way that can be overcome is to use the very best available at all



Frank Farina: Australian head coach.

times, including the Oceania qualifiers. Whether that's possible at all times is another story.

Finally as far as the Ned Zelic case is concerned, it's all over. Whether Frank was right or wrong doesn't matter, Soccer is a team sport not an individual one. Ned knows that, so he can't blame anyone anymore but himself for his self imposed exile. He has made his bed, so he now has to lie in it.

To continually chase him or ask him to come back, not only undermines the authority of the boss (coach) but also plays havoc on team morale. As far as I am concerned he is history unless he makes the first move. And it has to be before November, not after we qualify (fingers crossed).

Dominic Scullino, Nerang QLD.

"Give unto Caesar..."

Dear Sir,

I'm responding to the letter which was sent in by Dominic Scullino of Nerang Qld "NSL DESERVES SLICE OF WOLVES OCEANIA WIND-FALL".

All I'd like to say is, Dominic if you win the lottery will you share it with all of Queensland? I don't think so. We don't live in a com-

munist society.

The Wolves players played in 45 degree heat not Soccer Australia. Also we are a family and hard

working club, we have to survive so no one else deserves the money but THE MIGHTY WOLLONGONG WOLVES.

Carlo Santomaggio, Wollongong, NSW.



Letters to the Editor

Oz Women Soccer's Uncertain Future

Dear Sir,

I would publicly like to express my concern for the state of womens soccer in Australia. Not only did we fail dismally at the Olympic Games, but now it seems that the administration of womens football in NSW is attempting to weaken one of Australia's strongest womens competitions.

In its wisdom the administration has decided to limit the number of 'elite' players at each of the clubs competing in this years of Womens Super League. Yes on the surface this looks like a fair way of evening the competition in the WSL, but I think the administration need to have a good look at the players they are considering to be 'elite'.

A list of over 50 players, mainly consisting of NSWITC and Northern NSWITC players from last season, has been circulated, with each club, except of the ITC squads, only allowed two players from this list each. For some unknown reason, some of the players who played for the NSW Sapphires in the Womens Supper League, Australia's premier womens competition, have been omitted from this list of 'elite' in favour of players who were never in the running for state selection.

Other players on this 'elite' list are players who were transferred into the ITC squad, after the commencement of the season last year, to help bring some maturity and stability to a very young squad, and also to help prevent them being slaughtered by the more experienced teams such as Marconi.

These players were not originally selected as 'elite' ITC players and at



Amy Taylor: Matildas midfielder.

the end of the season were dumped by the ITC as, being in their early 20's, they are too old to play in the now under 17 ITC team. As they are now on the 'elite' list, even though they are amateur, they are being told where they can or cannot play.

Four of these ladies are currently training with the Nepean squad, a club which has struggled to be competitive in previous seasons, giving them a chance of competitive in previous seasons, giving them a chance of competing with the big guns of womens soccer. Nepean and Marconi played must leave. The only other options to them are to rejoin their previous club before the ITC, which happens to be current champions Marconi, or as suggested by the

administration, sign on with a club in the 1st division. I personally cannot see how forcing these so called 'elite' players to play in a lower division could possibly improve the standard of football in the SWL. Maybe they are afraid that their truly 'elite', although young, ITC team will not produce the competition results needed for womens soccer to secure the government funding which has been put to such good use.

Overall I suggest that the administration of womens soccer in NSW take a good look at who they are hurting instead of helping those without need. And please remember that womens football in Australia is amateur, and at the smaller clubs such as Nepean, these girls actually pay for the privilege of playing the game they love, not have it all given to them as at Marconi or the ITC.

Ben de Beus.

No favours for South

Dear Sir,

I can't believe that South Melbourne would want to postpone a couple of their games this month because three of their players are required for international duties. Even with a few injured players on their list, you would still think that they would have enough fire power in their squad to win games with players missing.

With a good lead at the top of the points table, they not only risk the psychological advantage of possibly losing the lead, they then have to play catch up football for points with midweek games. History shows that very rarely do teams succeed in grabbing maximum points from three games in 8 or 9 days.

Just check past statistics and you will see that success rates are very low. Wollongong Wolves will have the same problem, but unlike South Melbourne, they had no choice.



Mickey Pettersen: South Melbourne coach.

With a squad as strong as South Melbourne, I certainly would not be given up a healthy weekend crowd plus a possible points lead on the table just because three of my best were on national duty.

There is also the factor that they could come back injured or sick from Colombia anyway, so what's the point in taking that sort of gamble.

Dominic Scullino, Nerang QLD.

Labbozzetta in the Public Eye

Dear Sir,

Watching Tony Labbozzetta's performance on SBS's "On The Ball" programme (February 11th) reminded me how out of touch Mr Labbozzetta is with football fans around the country.

He seemed to take some of Kyle Patterson's questions quite personally, even though they were only a compilation of fans' question to SBS's web site.

It seems he does not give a damn about what the fans think. With the amount of hats he is wearing, he could be accused of having a severe conflict of interest, yet he does not seem to care.

The rhetoric he spoke was almost identical to his appearance on the show last season, and we all know what happened to the so called reform he referred to. I had to laugh at Johnny Warren's summation when he said, "It all sounds nice. We've heard it before." Well said, Johnny.

Mr Labbozzetta also has questionable abilities to get along with outsiders, or anybody who disagrees with him. He has an amazing track record when it comes to making enemies. In the OTB interview, he made reference to David Hill's decision to scrap Parramatta Eagles, Melbourne Zebras, and Heidelberg United.

Although David Hill's reign was largely a failure, this was perhaps his best decision, but amazingly, Mr Labbozzetta still holds a grudge, hardly a desirable quality in any administrator.

And he has entered another slanging match with Joe Brundolino. Perhaps he wasn't expecting competition for the SA Chairmanship.

If Mr Labbozzetta is elected, which is a virtual certainty, SA will continue to be as exclusive and secretive as a Masonic fraternity. If SA do not listen to the fans, there will be a breakaway league without a double. However,

unlike Dominic Scullino (ABSW, Feb 6), I believe a FIFA ban would be disastrous for the game.

If the Socceroos were banned from international competition, our best chance of promoting the game to the mainstream is gone.

I was also appalled upon reading John Economos' 'Good Oil' (Feb 6th), that SA will received \$2 million of Wollongong's hard earned money from the Oceania Club Championship.

Since they do not promote and market the league, or provide financial or other assistance to the clubs, they do not deserve one cent.

Wollongong should fight this, as they did 100% of the work. This reinforces my view that SA only serve themselves.

One thing is for certain. An independent board of directors will not be introduced under the current power system within the game, whereby stakeholders

take a vote. Think about it — would the stakeholders appoint a reformer when their power would be in jeopardy? Of course not.

At the risk of sounding

revolutionary, the fans are demanding change and the game MUST be overhauled.

G. Owen, Geelong, VIC.



Tony Labbozzetta: Out of touch.

OFF THE CROSSBAR



By Allan Crisp

VIDDIE RIPE FOR ROO RECALL

After eight years abroad wearing the mantle of a professional footballer, Aurelio Vidmar sees his recall to the Socceroo squad as a huge bonus.

The elder of the vaunted Vidmar brothers has two World Cup campaigns behind him and a collection of 35 Australian international caps in his wardrobe as he prepares to be outfitted in the latest Socceroo apparel.

Despite his long absence overseas, Vidmar, who began his NSL career at 18, has eclipsed the magical 200-game milestone.

At 34, Vidmar has every reason to believe that his international career is a figment of the past.

But his dominant role as Adelaide City Force captain since returning from overseas has thrust the midfield playmaker, cum, striker, cum, sweeper smack bang into the middle of Australian coach Frank Farina's plans.

"Look, at 34, I'm on the edge when it comes to thinking about World Cup football," Vidmar said. "But, I think my form with Adelaide City has been reasonably good and if I keep injury free and playing well, you never know."

"At the end of the day, it's up to Frank and Arnie (national assistant coach Graham Arnold) and if I play at my best, I could have a good shot at making the squad."

Admirers of Vidmar are wondering if this



Aurelio Vidmar: Seen here in action for Australia during a friendly game against South Africa in 1993.

recall could spark a reunion in the green and gold with sibling Tony — the Glasgow Ranger.

Could it also see the former Flinders Park Primary School and ex-Underdale High School pair repeating their magnificent brotherly act of combining to score as they did against World Cup champions Argentina at the Sydney Football Stadium in the 1994 qualifiers?

Vidmar, along with many other Australian-based players, are aware that they are forming a Socceroo shadow cabinet

until all of the overseas stars become available for the World Cup qualifiers.

However, Aurelio Vidmar represents a case apart because the skilled performer has climbed dizzy heights than many of our players performing abroad could only conjure in their dreams.

Vidmar began his professional career in Belgium with KV Kortrijk and continued in that country with Waragem and Standard Liege before switching to Dutch giant Feyenoord.

Sion (Switzerland) and Tenerife (Spain)

followed before he wound up his Marco Polo type travels with Sanfrecce Hiroshima.

He achieved a national honour in 1994-95 with Liege when he topped the Belgian goalscoring list with 22-goals.

Vidmar was acclaimed Oceania Footballer of The Year in 1994 and was a Swiss Cup winner with Sion in 1996.

He also has leadership experience having captained Australia against South Africa at Hindmarsh Stadium in 1993 before leading the Socceroos against Macedonia and Hungary in Europe in 1997 and later against Paraguay.

When Farina deliberates over who might guide his troops on the field, he would do well to consider the Adelaide City skipper.

After all, not many players have enjoyed the dual experience of calling heads or tails before NSL action or declaring red or yellow when the coloured FIFA coin is spun to herald international kick-offs.

HEAVY PENALTY

Port Lion Pirates player Stavros Parissos has been found guilty of assaulting Campbelltown City player David Menechella during a pre-season trial match and has been suspended for five weeks.

Parissos also was fined \$500 and placed on a \$1000 good behaviour bond.

MAKRIS GREET'S VILIC

Highly credentialled coach Dragan Vilić arrived in Adelaide last Wednesday to talk terms with NSL candidate South Coast Eagles, the club bankrolled by SA businessman Con Makris.

A former Bosnian national team and Partizan Belgrade boss, Vilić has been training the Birkalla State League team since his arrival.

The newcomer has agreed to remain here for at least a week to continue negotiations, which includes taking over the stewardship of the Birkalla State League squad.

Birkalla last week relegated its State

League coach Zoran Maricic from senior coach to assistant after Birks lost 0-3 to Adelaide City in a Summer Series game.

Makris bought Birkalla as a nursery club to feed South Coast Eagles should his NSL bid be accepted for the 2002 season.

Maricic, who guided Birkalla throughout the Summer Series campaign, has agreed to assist Vilić, if he is eventually chosen as the senior coach.

Makris has emphasised that should Vilić agree to join Birkalla he would be part of the new NSL consortium's coaching panel.

Meanwhile, the Birkalla owner said that ex-Melbourne Knights coach Ken Worden and former Australian international, Alan Davidson, had not been ruled out of his long range plans.

SA SUMMER SERIES ROUND 6 RESULTS

Olympic FC 4 (Tsokolas 2, Spatharou, S. Parissos) Hills Hawks 0

Raiders 2 (J. Berlinger, Saric) Seaford Surfers 1 (Maguire)

Modbury Jets 1 (Prescott) Croydon Kings 0. Metro Stars 1 (Schimizzi) Port Lion Pirates 0.

Para Hills Knights 3 (Waine 2, Breton) Noarlunga Bulldogs 1 (Foy).

Blue Eagles 4 (Mantzarapis, Calvanese, Sergi, tog) Cobras 0.

Enfield Falcons 4 (Rechichi 2, Giovanello, Rossi) Cumberland Foxes 1 (Paterson)

Campbelltown Red Devils 2 (Caputo, Daniel Menechella) Adelaide City 2 (Filewood, Fyfe).

Birkalla 7 (Hagias 3, Pezos 2, Mihalopoulos, Fusco) Panthers 0.

White City Woodville 2 (Pavanello, Petron) Western Strikers 0.

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7.30am-9am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Channel 10 Sports Presenter Robbie Popplestone, former Australian international John Perin, The Advertiser soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and SA Amateur League player-coach Peter Millar.

Volunteers sought for Kanga Cup

By Graham Cooke

Soccer Canberra are hoping to cash in on enthusiasm generated by the staging of Olympic football in Canberra to reap a harvest of volunteers for the coming winter season.

New chief executive officer Alan Lee said that opportunities existed in the increasingly prestigious Kanga Cup international junior competition.

"It is a world class tournament which last year was contested by 153 teams including 39 from the United States and six from New Zealand," he said.

"Our planning this year is on the basis of 200 entrants, including 56 from the US. Interest has also been shown from a number of countries including Italy, China, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Russia and South Africa."

Lee said Soccer Canberra are looking to fill vacancies in a range of activities from office administration and reception through to supervising playing venues and receiving overseas teams as they arrive.

Interested people can contact the organisation on 02-6260 4000 or by e-mail soccercanberra@dynamite.com.au



Matthew Horsley: Wollongong Wolves captain.

Dear Sir,

Mr Scullino questions whether Johnny Warren realises or cares in regard to the 'World Club Championships payout', in this case to the Wollongong Wolves, as to what damaging consequences, to his mind, would affect our National League.

Mr Scullino goes on to suggest that Johnny Warren would like to see a minority of clubs succeed while others remain, as he put it, poor. He even goes as far as to say that in last year's competition in which South Melbourne competed, "half the money should go to the remainder of the clubs for helping Souths win the competition".

I'm sure that anybody involved with the South Melbourne club would be astonished to hear that the other clubs somehow helped them in becoming champions. In fact I'm sure all of the other clubs would refute that in an instant.

Not only in football but in every sport there are financial rewards for the victors. To suggest that we are in a unique situation and that we should inform FIFA of this is undermining other countries who genuinely have enormous problems both in structure

Letter to the Editor STILL ON THE WOLVES' OCEANIA WINDFALL

and in finance due to their country's social problems. We here in Australia are fortunate to be able to enjoy success in a wide variety of sports at all levels with structures in place for children to aspire to any of their chosen sports.

We should not view the success of some as a loss to the rest, but rather as an incentive to aspire to that level which does reward hard work. We should not look at being opportunists in taking from others' achievements but instead learn by their example.

Last season serves as a perfect example with Perth Glory (profitable off the field) playing a provincial team with moderate standing in Wollongong Wolves. Personally I wanted to see Perth rewarded for their efforts in leading by example, but I surely didn't miss the other side of the coin in what affect it has had on Wollongong by winning the NSL and now Oceania Champions. Not only do they gain financial reward but immeasurable value in exposure for the club both nationally and internationally.

The financial gain provides them with an opportunity to strengthen the club's future. Every club can achieve this without exception. Our league does not have the extreme differences between the rich and poor clubs, as it is overseas, not yet. What is required though is a solid professional structure throughout the club, all working for the same cause and putting in the hard work.

These are the only ingredients for long term success. It has been proven in football that money doesn't buy titles, sure the big clubs have advantages, but they've worked to achieve this, it wasn't handed to them.

Our focus in this country, I'm afraid to say, is misplaced in areas of little benefit. For

example, what would we do if the World Club Championships were terminated by FIFA? Not that I wish this but the point is we cannot sit and wait for opportunities such as this competition or the World Cup for that matter.

For years everyone has been saying that if we qualify for the World Cup, soccer will take off in this country. I very much doubt that people will run to Morwell to watch Eastern Pride or go to any other club simply because the National team made us proud.

The problem with soccer in this country is in the core, if the core is rotten then there stem many problems. Let's not aim at the easily identified targets like Johnny Warren due to their exposure, let's question the people responsible who should be held accountable.

For it is the men in suits who steer the game into direction the rest of us just follow. We must all play a part, for each can in their own way be heard and assist in the cause. Without a unified desire we will accomplish very little and always lay the blame on someone else's doorstep.

The time for complaining without input, for criticising without being constructive, seeking positions for oneself and not for the good of all, must come to an end (though not likely at this election).

Soccer as a sport in this country needs to grow up and take responsibility of its direction and future, we can't afford to gamble as we did with the television rights only to put ourselves in the devil's hand. We need authority by example with a vision and the courage to make things right for a sport that has been lethargic for over 20 years.

G. S
Melbourne VIC.

Juventus kick-off ACT Cup defence

By Graham Cooke

Gungahlin Juventus begin their defence of the ACT Federation Cup with a game against O'Connor Knights, from the ACT State League, on March 11.

Last year Juventus went through the competition unbeaten, ending with a 7-1 thrashing of Tuggeranong United in the final. This time they will have the additional hurdle of going through the group stage with what will virtually be a reserve team while seven of their players complete NSW Premier League com-

mitments with Belconnen Blue Devils.

The competition, which has been used as a curtain-raiser to the league season for more than a decade, will be played initially in four groups of four with the winner and runner-up in each going forward to a knock-out quarter final.

The draw is: Group 1, Canberra Olympic, ANU, University of Canberra, White Eagles.

Group 2, Gungahlin Juventus, O'Connor Knights, Belconnen United, Weston Creek Royals. Group 3, Tuggeranong United, Capital City Suns, Burns Club, Canberra City. Group 4, Canberra Deakin, Monaro, Queanbeyan City, Spirit FC.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

BRISBANE STRIKERS 2 WOLLONGONG WOLVES 4

By Glenn Davis

Wollongong Wolves kept up their intensity for back-to-back titles with a convincing yet torrid 4-2 win against a 10-man Brisbane Strikers at Ballymore last Friday night.

The Wolves came from behind twice in a thrilling and open match to make it eight straight matches undefeated.

But it had to rely on Strikers midfielder Nick Meredith being sent-off just before halftime for their victory.

Sydney referee Simon Micallef produced the turning point in the game in the 44th minute when he showed Meredith a red card for an alleged elbow on Wolves' Matt Hersley.

Wollongong got off to a dream start in the fifth minute,



Wollongong Wolves midfielder, Paul Reid (left) celebrates with a teammate after scoring against Brisbane Strikers.

when midfielder Paul Reid chipped the Strikers defence from halfway to allow Scott Chipperfield to slot home.

It took the Strikers almost 15 minutes to recover from the setback before Peter Dwyer levelled the scores.

Meredith struck a powerful left-foot shot into the hands of Wolves keeper Grant Barlow, who fumbled allowing Dwyer to slot home.

Both sides had further chances to put their sides ahead before the

Strikers got their noses in front in the 28th minute.

Again the Strikers goal came from a Wolves defensive error, when sweeper Ben Blake headed into the path of Peter Buljan who raced clear to hammer home his first goal for his new club.

Strikers midfielder David Pilic missed two easy opportunities to put the game out of reach for the visitors but was narrowly astray on both occasions.

Wolves striker Stuart Young also missed a golden opportunity to level the scores when his 34th minute attempt was blocked by Strikers keeper Corey Baldock.

Wolves still trailed 15 minutes after the break before Saso Petrovski and Reid put the visitors ahead with two goals within a minute.

Midfielder Robert Middleby, who played havoc down the left flank, floated in a harmless cross which Baldock spilled allowing Petrovski to tap home the equaliser.

Reid then put his side ahead after finding space in midfield against a tiring Strikers defence which gave Wollongong the lead for the second time.

The outnumbered Strikers conceded their fourth goal in the 71st minute when Young drove home with his left foot after racing onto a long pass from George Souris.

MARCONI STALLIONS 5 SYDNEY UNITED 2

By Arvind Hickman

Marconi have returned to form with an impressive 5-2 victory against Sydney United in the local derby at Marconi Stadium last Friday night.

An Archie Thompson double highlighted a brave Marconi fightback in a game that was a lot closer than the scoreline reflected.

Marconi Coach, Eddie Krncevic, was happy with the result after a nervous start.

"They went past us in the first minute, we copped a goal and probably it was the best thing that happened to us because it woke us up. They gave us a jolt but it was a positive jolt," he said.

"All in all its three points for us, a derby game and it was an important three points. We new it wasn't going to be easy but towards the end there was a lot of holes."

Sydney United Coach, Alan Hunter, was disappointed his team couldn't keep up the intensity for the whole game.

"It was just disappointing that we couldn't get back into rhythm, the fourth goal killed us obviously because I thought we were back into the game at 3-2.

We gave away silly ball and they punished us again."

Sydney United certainly started the better of the two teams and stunned the Marconi crowd after only 30 odd seconds.

Tom Pondeljak was placed into a mile of space down the right flank and measured his cross to perfection as Francis Awaritefe headed home against his former club.

Marconi should have equalised only three minutes later as John Gibson was brought down for a penalty. Kris Trajanovski made a mess of the spot kick pushing it wide to the left.

Marconi were then dealt a cruel blow when Buddy Farah fell awkwardly injuring his ankle, and had to be stretchered off.

An equaliser finally arrived in the 22nd minute when John Gibson let loose a drive from 25 metres out to beat a bewildered Steve Tolios in goal.



Kris Trajanovski: Man of the Match.

Archie Thompson then had a chance to grab the lead late in the half when he beat two players but pushed his shot around the post.

Marconi scored their second goal only ten minutes after the resumption of play from a spot kick after Kain Rastall was ruled to have handled the ball on the edge of the box. Trajanovski stepped up to curl a brilliant free kick into the top left corner and send the crowd into raptures.

Thompson then increased the lead after Gibson manoeuvred him into space by drawing the defence and playing him wide. The finish was a sharp low shot under the keeper, as can be expected from the recently called up Socceroo.

Pondeljak sought to spark a revival for United after his brilliant shot from 20 metres out took a wicked bounce to deceive Aceski and reduce the deficit to 3-2.

However, this was short lived as Thompson gathered his second goal in the 68th minute, a tap in after Tolios could only parry a John Maisano shot into his path.

The rout was complete in extra time after substitute Royce Brownlie took the ball around the 'keeper to continue his impressive form and cap a highly entertaining game.

NEWCASTLE UNITED 2 NORTHERN SPIRIT 4

By Greg Danvers

Northern Spirit recorded their first victory over Newcastle, either as the Breakers or United, in three NSL seasons with a 4-2 demolition on a very uneven surface at Marathon Stadium on Friday night.

Sixty-third minute substitute Daniel Watkins was the game breaker as Spirit scored four times in 16 minutes, all at the far post, to end any slim, and only a slim mathematical and probably hypothetical, chance of United making the top six.

"It is a big hurdle," Newcastle United coach Lee Sterrey said.

"It is a much bigger hurdle now but it's just really disappointing. Our first 45 minutes was our best football in terms of movement, passion, desire and mobility all season.

"Every ingredient was there for the first 45, we score a penalty and from the minute they kicked off, you would swear it was 15 minutes of sheer madness.

"We lost our shape, lost our direction, lost leadership and at the end of the day, lost our way."

United should have led 1-0 after 17 minutes but for an inept penalty attempt from out of form striker John Buonavoglia.

Spirit's Mike Smith brought down Buonavoglia in the area who then stepped up to take the penalty only to softly poke the ball to Perosh's right. Perosh easily read the shot and dived to the right smothering a chance for the Novocastrians to lead 1-0 in front of 6875 fans. Spirit were well represented in the crowd.

Four minutes into the second half, Anthony Surjan converted the second penalty of the match after Buonavoglia was again fouled in the area. This time by Matthew Bingley.

"To be fair, the first 45 minutes, we were very poor," Northern Spirit coach Mick Hickman said.

"We should have been punished more. Newcastle had a penalty and should have scored."

Matthew Langdon, inspired by a Northern Spirit line-up that was not about to throw in the towel after a strong half-time verbal shellacking by Hickman, equalised in the 60th minute. An innocuous shove from United defender Todd McManus brought a free kick outside the area and Langdon was able to thread the

ball between United keeper Bob Catlin and the far post.

"We were lucky to be where we were at halftime (0-0) and that gave me a bit of time to rip into a few of them," Hickman added.

Game-breaker Daniel Watkins replaced Ben Burgess, who has struggled in recent weeks with injury, in the 63rd minute. Burgess remonstrated with Hickman after being replaced but would have been extremely happy with the outcome as Watkins slotted home two class goals.

"Ben has a real desire to play continually but he's got a couple of injuries," Hickman said of his decision to replace Burgess.

"I wanted to protect him he's too valuable for the team to continue and make his injuries worse."

Watkins' first goal came with his first touch, in the 64th minute, after Ryan Griffiths found Watkins unmarked at the far post to volley home.

The second six minutes later after poor defence from the home side, Griffiths and Watkins combined again and the third Spirit goal was in the net at the far post again.

Craig Foster curled the ball past a cast of thousands from a free kick outside the area, and you guessed it at the far post.

Michael Slater, a 45th minute replacement for Mick Smith, tried in vain to claim the goal in his 250th NSL match but the scoresheet shows Foster the scorer.

"We bounced back after the Newcastle penalty and took some opportunist goals," Hickman again.

"The result flattered us, it was a good win but it flattered us I think after the first 45 minutes."

United substitute striker Daniel McBreen scored a late consolation goal with 11 minutes but Spirit had the match in the bag and the points to keep alive their finals dream.



Daniel Watkins: Instrumental to Northern Spirit victory.

ADELAIDE CITY 1 FOOTBALL KINGZ 1

By Allan Crisp

Last week, Adelaide City Force was the "pigeon" when it defeated Eastern Pride with a last gasp goal. On Friday night it was the "statue" when former City player Mike Cartwright scored his first NSL goal two minutes from full time to level the ledger for the Football Kingz 1-1.

The Force snatched the lead in the 58th minute with a brilliantly conceived move, instigated by skipper Aurelio Vidmar, who ended a superb 40-metre run with a pass to Claudio Pelosi on the left flank.

The Italian import flashed over a pin-point cross for substitute Nathan Day to gleefully head home his first goal of the season.

The successful Kiwi goal was engineered by artificially blond-haired duo Jeff Campbell and Cartwright, who cut a return pass path through the hesitant City defence that could well have been in the shape of a question mark over Adelaide's finals chances.

Unfortunately, those goals were two rare highlights of the worst match seen at Hindmarsh Stadium this season — a contest littered with errors, inept passing, unpressured turnovers and incredibly poor finishing.

Kingz were the major offenders in the missed sitters department, but that was because they forced their way into the penalty area more times and earned more scoring chances.

City had key men Brad Hassell and Ante Kovacevic back from suspension, but was missing banned players Ivan Karlovic and Gianluca Ligati.

Force coach Zoran Matic drastically reshuffled his starting line-up with Carl Veart at sweeper, Vidmar and Pelosi in the midfield, stationed Hassell and Kovacevic on the flanks and began with young guns, Scott Tunbridge and Kosta Salapadisis as front runners, with Pelosi lurking

from the deep.

If the aim was to tighten the defence, the switches were effective, but the downside was that City lost the attacking sparkle that had characterised its crowd pleasing performances in previous home matches.

Uncertainty replaced improvisation and the situation worsened for the home side as Matic made further positional changes as he strove to rectify the mistakes of the first half.

The introduction of Day was a masterstroke by Matic as the substitute netted 10 minutes after entering the fray.

Never a shrinking violet, Day was in the referee's black book after being yellow carded just four minutes after coming off the bench, but there was no doubting the former Sharks influence on his struggling team mates.

With Kingz captain Harry Ngata starting on the bench, deputy, Mark Burton was an inspirational leader, probing and prodding Paul Urlovic, Andy Bluhm, Rufer and Gerard Davis into positive action.

During the post-match press conference attended by Matic, Kingz co-coach Shane Rufer and City vice-captain Veart, the Force coach fired broadsides at his players.

"They didn't want to play, I can't find an excuse," Matic fumed. "I don't have to prepare men to work, they should motivate themselves."

Quizzed over the fourth minute goal scoring opportunity blazed over the crossbar by City midfielder David Terminello, the Force boss replied, "That first chance was a killer. They thought it was going to be easy — just like that. But Christmas only comes once every 365 days."

Christmas, in fact, came 19 times for the Kingz, many of those chances being simple conversions, but the Kiwis managed to contrive varied methods of firing attempts high, wide and not too handsomely off target.

Asked if top six qualification was now beyond the Kingz, Rufer said, "There are nine games left for us. We have to believe we can do it until its mathematically impossible."

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

MELB KNIGHTS STH MELBOURNE

4
0

By Bert van Bedaf

It was billed as a "war" between cross-town rivals and it finished as a walkover as the Melbourne Knights thumped South Melbourne 4-0 at Somers St last Friday night.

Knights from losing 4-0 at home to South and this season they went down 4-1 at Bob Jane stadium.

Yet, there could not have been a greater form reversal than Friday night, the Knights from a 5-2 loss to Wollongong and South from a 6-1 victory over Marconi last week.

South coach Mike Petersen described it as "a dirty day at the office", adding, "It was out first bad day at the office all season and we'll wear it like men. But full credit to



Stephen Panapolous of South Melbourne (right) and Andy Vargas of Melbourne Knights contest the ball.

Flares lit the night sky as a brief burst of mayhem netted the Knights three goals in three minutes to stun the league leader and effectively steal the fire from the Southern chariot.

Toto Da Costa broke the deadlock in the 18th minute with a blistering run, holding off Steve Iosifidis and striking past Michael Petkovic in front of a passionate Knights crowd in the Viduka grandstand.

Two minutes later Adrian Cervinski duped Petkovic with a looping header from an Andrew Marth free-kick and the mob went wild.

When Joel Porter smashed the third goal past a hapless Petkovic in the 21st minute the Somers St ground shook on its foundations. Reminiscent of the championship years, the time-honored chant, "Croatia, Croatia", echoed around the wind-swept ground.

There might have been some thought of South coming back in the second half, but Lubo Lapsansky's strike in the 54th minute, after fine moves by Porter and substitute Anthony Pelikan, doused any fight the Lakesiders might have cherished.

Times of greatness were relived and past losses avenged. Last season not even guest player Peter Beardsley could stop the

the Knights, we were outgunned all over the park. We didn't have a winner all day."

South's loss brought a remarkable 16-week undefeated streak to an end and Petersen praised his players for holding out the opposition for so long.

"It has been a solid effort by the players, but our streak had to come to an end some time. We were just flat on the day," he said.

With keeping his team's place in the top six at stake, Knights coach Vlado Vanis admitted to having had sleepless nights before the derby. His surprise solution to the clash was all-out attack with three strikers.

"We took a risk with three people up front. But it worked out all right.

All three strikers scored and Lubo (Lapsansky) as well. Today, every chance we took went in," Vanis said.

The only sour note for the Knights was the substitution of scorer Da Costa after 35 minutes. The Angolan-born striker went off with a neck injury. He was taken to hospital in a brace for precautionary X-rays.

Goran Lozanovski would have hoped for a better result to celebrate his 200th game in the NSL. The 27-year-old forward is in his fourth season with the club. He previously played with Preston, Adelaide City and the Collingwood Warriors.

CANBERRA COSMOS PARRAMATTA POWER

0
1

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Cosmos failed to provide coach Tom Sermanni with the perfect parting present, going down 1-0 to Parramatta Power at Bruce Stadium on Saturday.

It was an emotional night, with a banner hanging from one stand stating 'Farewell Tom' and a standing ovation for the popular team boss both before and after the game.

But in the end it was Parramatta who, in the words of coach David Mitchell, "got the monkey off our backs" by halting a run of games without a win which stretched back into December.

It had been a game destined for a goalless draw when, in the 77th minute, youngster Luke Roodenburg made up for an earlier miss by pouncing on a loose ball after Walter Ardone's shot had been blocked.

From a difficult position on the edge of the penalty area with a number of players in front of him, he coolly steered his shot back into the net.

Mitchell said Roodenburg had been drafted into the first team "because we felt we needed someone with a bit of presence up front and Luke has that. He did the job for us tonight."

The first half was a forgettable display of misplaced passes and bungled opportunities, but it was Parramatta who finally got a hold on the game shortly after the interval.

They had an excellent chance to take the lead when Cosmos goalkeeper Angelo Konstantinou committed himself on a charge out to the edge of the penalty area and lost

the ball. The cross came to Roodenburg, but experienced defender Hiroshi Miyazawa pressured him into misjudging his header, which went wide.

Matthew Biggins saw his shot hacked off the Cosmos line by Con Anthopoulos, but there was no such let-off with Roodenburg's second attempt, a few minutes later.

Cosmos began to respond, and could have stolen at least a point in the closing stages. Anthopoulos' long range drive was tipped over the bar by Andrew Crews, and the agile goalkeeper



Luke Roodenburg: Parramatta match winner.

was called into action again five minutes from the end, this time to dispose of a powerfully driven shot from substitute Shane Lyons.

Mitchell said he was delighted to be back on the winning way. "We now have two really tough games coming up, but with the determination we showed tonight, I think we can get results," he said.

Sermanni, who leaves for the United States today to take up an appointment in the new women's professional league, said it had not been a good game to watch. "It was fairly lifeless and neither side could really get on a roll," he said.

"Despite the result, I would say we are on a par with Parramatta who, after all, have a full-time playing staff and a lot of resources. Our promise is there, but I am disappointed because we can play a lot better than that."



PERTH GLORY EASTERN PRIDE

2
1

By Richard Kreider

What was meant to be an opportunity for fourth placed Perth Glory to improve on their goal average turned out to be a hard slog especially in the second-half when they could only manage a 2-1 win over the league's doormats Eastern Pride at a humid Perth Oval last Saturday night.

If that wasn't bad enough, Glory's already deficient resources will be further weakened for this week's away clash in New Zealand against Kingz following a 16th minute second yellow card offence and the ensuing red to Alistair Edwards.

"It was a difficult task for us today, having to play with ten men in sticky conditions and without six or seven key players," said Glory coach Bernd Stange. "What our team did today was outstanding considering the circumstances," Stange said.

Pride boss Jeff Hopkins felt his side could have taken something from the game had they not allowed the home side to score just moments after the sending-off. "We made some pretty naïve mistakes out there, at the wrong time especially," he said.

Socceroos Kasey Wehrman, Scott Miller and goalkeeper coach Tony Franken, Youth International skipper Ljubo Milicevic plus the injured Robert Trajkovski, Brad Maloney and Edgar Junior, meant Stange was forced to put Craig Deans, Vinko Buljubasic and youngster Nick Mrdja on the bench. Both Deans and debutant Mrdja were used late in the game and would have more than pleased Stange with their effervescent offensive play.

If ever the intrepid and inspirational qualities of skipper Gareth Naven was needed it was on Saturday when his team went a player down. Naven, who is 32 next Saturday, continually led by example when his side was threatened — and that was quite frequently.

As expected, it was the Perth side who looked the more threatening from the opening whistle, especially Bobby Despotovski, Damian Mori and Gary Faria. But while they may have looked threatening offensively, the Perth side was found wanting when trying to inflict the killer blow. Another reason for Glory not being able to find the net more often was because of the acrobatics of Pride's promising young goalkeeper Eugene Galekovic.

Before the Pride could take advantage of a ten-man opposition, Glory was left off the hook just two minutes after the sending-off when Dean Fak inflicted a clumsy tackle on

Despotovski just inside the box.

The Perth striker himself took the spot-kick and made no mistake in notching up his 12th goal — two short of his personal best for a NSL season.

The home side took a two-goal advantage into the change-rooms when John Carbone started and finished off a superb move, together with a world-class pass from Despotovski, with an unstoppable grass burner past Galekovic two minutes before the interval.

The Victorian outfit managed to get on the score-sheet two minutes from the restart when Hutchinson eluded the offside trap before firing a Fak through-ball past Jason Petkovics' right hand.

Although the plucky Pride side carved many openings into their opposition's half, they were thwarted by either Naven, Jamie Harnwell, PJ Roberts and Dion Valle or simply let down by inaccurate finishing from Naum Sekulovski, John



Eastern Pride goalkeeper, Eugene Galekovic saves a shot during the game against Perth Glory.

Hutchinson, Mark Atkinson and former Blackpool and Chester City striker Mike Conroy.

Despotovski's exit at the 85th minute mark, introduced another debutant for Glory in former Canberra Cosmos striker Nick Mrdja. His presence, together with fellow substitute Deans added a much-needed boost of pace and direction from the middle third at a time when the home side were showing dangerous signs of heavy legs.



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Can Olympic Rope in the Stallions?

By John Economos

Sydney Olympic who last weekend had a bye, is back in action this Sunday night when they

take on Marconi at the Belmore Sports Ground.

Olympic last Sunday took the opportunity to have a friendly hit out against NSW State League side Stanmore

Hawks at Henson Park and ran out 5-1 winners.

Coach Branko Culina will be quite on edge until his star goalkeeper, Clint Bolton, returns to Sydney from

Colombia with the Australian squad this Saturday.

Olympic will have midfielder George Goutzioulis out serving a suspension for four yellow cards, but have midfield-playmaker Kresimir Marusic back from having trials with a club in China.

Marusic returned into Australia last Saturday and Culina may be a trifle reluctant to rush him into the first team, especially as Troy Halpin has hit top form the past few weeks.

The fitness of both midfielder Ante Moric plus defender Glenn Moore who have been carrying groin injuries, still remain in doubt.

Sydney Olympic's goal-scoring sweeper and captain, Ante Juric, stated last night: "It's a big match for both of the teams, especially for us if we are to remain in touch and consolidate ourselves for a Top Two position."

"We have Troy, (Halpin), back to his best form and young striker Dylan MacAllister has been doing real well upfront and has come into his own."

"Marconi will also be hoping that their two star internationals, (Angelo Costanzo and Archie Thompson), will be back in time and fit to play on Sunday night," Juric speculated.

"Either of them can change

the game for Marconi and I also rate their little midfielder Christian Care who can also be dangerous," reflected Olympic's valuable skipper.

Marconi hopes to have their two internationals, Costanzo and Thompson back in time from their tour with the Australian squad that went to Colombia last Sunday morning.

Both players joined Marconi this season and both to date have already proved to be the side's most valuable components.

Thompson last Saturday scored another two goals in Marconi's convincing 5-2 win over neighbouring Sydney United at the Marconi Stadium.

Marconi's brilliant left wingback Brendan Renaud, missed last Saturday's match though injury but expects to be fit by Sunday.

Renaud told ABSW last night: "Whenever these two teams meet they always put on a great entertaining game."

"We have no suspensions and the only injured player we have is defender Buddy Farah."

"Buddy most unfortunately badly damaged the ligaments to his right ankle last Saturday against Sydney United."

"Mark Babic hasn't been training too much because of his calf problem."

"John Gibson did very well for us in the midfield last Sunday."

"Olympic fans always provide a great atmosphere at Belmore Sports Ground

which lifts all of us to play even more entertaining Soccer," ended Renaud.



Ante Juric Olympic's valuable skipper (right) in action and on the ball, gliding past the Perth Glory's dynamic striker, Bobby Despotovski.



Damon Collina: Olympic's defender-cum midfielder.

Sydney Olympic vs Marconi Stallions



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Dominic Longo



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Victorian Premier League



ROUND 4

PHOENIX END BERGER'S RUN

PHOENIX 1
HEIDELBERG 0

By George Koukeris

Under an Aussie Rules inspired banner, Heidelberg United hosted Greek rivals Altona East. Phoenix proclaiming that "Tonight's the Night we're under lights, You'll see the Bergers shining Bright".

What transpired under those lights was the end of Heidelberg's winning streak as Phoenix continued their unbeaten run by defeating Heidelberg 1-0 away at



Olympic Village.

The match started on a high octave as the Bergers were eager to set the pace early. Peter Kakos came close to opening the score in the 6th minute with a powerful crack that just parried wide.

Midway through the first

half, Alfonzo Opazo started to stamp his name on the game with some blistering attacks on goal. On the other end Jani Suric was putting his efforts for the Phoenix into action as the shots on goal accumulated into double figures. Suric was well backed by Paul Donnelly in midfield.

In the second half, the Berger's increased the tempo as Damien Vojtek, Cameron Brown and George Georgiadis started to find their rhythm.

In the 75th minute, Phoenix coach Chris Taylor replaced a tired Mohamed Elkersh with George Papadopoulos up front and the dividends paid off in just five minutes. George Papadopoulos and Nick Papadopoulos worked well together as a Giovanni DeAmicis through-ball caught the Berger's defence by surprise. The counter attack was well executed to give new keeper Manny Papas little chance of stopping the winning strike.

In the 85th minute Suric was substituted for Evan Papadopoulos and the Papadopoulos trio, Evan, George and Nick came very close to making it 2-0. Terry Antoniadis was the orchestrator, but Eric Vasiliadis thwarted the charge at the last moment and knocked the ball out of play.

The Phoenix now remain undefeated after four rounds. They are in second position and impress as contenders for

the premiership this season.

SHARKS RIP INTO THUNDER

PORT MELBOURNE 4
DANDENONG 2

By David Davutovic

Dandenong Thunder succumbed to its third successive defeat, losing 4-2 at home against a rampant Port Melbourne Sharks who maintained their 100 per cent record in the process.

Port took an early lead through Sam Poutakidis, who curled his 15-metre shot into the top corner after some fine work on the right flank from Arthur Tsirtsakis in the 18th minute.

The home side kept in touch with Costa Caimakamis slotting a 23rd minute penalty past Steve Wardle after a Sharks defender was adjudged to have handled in the area.

The Sharks restored their lead after 51 minutes through John Pappas, who tucked the ball away from point blank range following Mitch Pino's cross.

A mini revival saw Dandenong pressure the opposition goal on three separate counts. David Grella blasted over the horizontal only 30 seconds after the Sharks goal,

while an unmarked Gazmend Ajdini sent his header wide of the post only minutes later and Boris Ovcin's 58th minute shot also sailed over the bar.

The experienced Sharks punished the Thunder accordingly with former Fawkner striker Peter Psarros tapping in a Nick Tsaltas cross in the 64th minute.

Psarros could easily have had a hat trick if not for some lackluster finishing. Tsaltas extended the lead to 4-1 as he easily beat the hap-



less Nick Kalamaris from the 6-yard box.

Probably the only positive to come out of the South Dandenong camp was the performance of substitute David Terek, who only signed on the Thursday prior to the game. The former VIS and Cranbourne striker rose above his marker to powerfully head home a Hugo Reyes cross in the 93rd minute.

Shark's coach Harry Chalkitis played down his side's sizzling early season form, saying, "I don't believe we are championship contenders at this stage. We are just reaping the benefits of our hard work in the pre season. My philosophy is to attack and score goals. I'd rather win 4-2 than 2-nil, it brings the people through the gates," Chalkitis said.

His counterpart Bobby McLaughlin was rather more subdued after the match, indicating that some of his players were "out of their depth in the Victorian Premier League".

He believed he had a stronger side last season in State League Division One. The Thunder has struggled with the losses of Viktor Memeti (injured), Idriz Pelja (overseas), Justin Gerri (last year's best and fairest) and Xhezair Sulemani (Melbourne Knights).

McLaughlin can look forward to the return of Pelja in the next couple of weeks from an overseas trip, whilst former Eastern Pride player Doug Marcina is likely to sign in the next week and will slot straight into the sweeper position. Croatian midfielder Goran Celig is also expected to join the squad in the coming weeks, pending a clearance on his transfer.

GREEN TAME LIONS

BENTLEIGH GREENS 2
PRESTON LIONS 1

By George Koukeris

Visitors Bentleigh Greens tamed Preston in an entertaining match, beating the Lions 2-1 at B.T. Connor Reserve last Sunday.

It was an important match for both clubs needing the three points to stay in contention with runaway leaders Port Melbourne and Altona East. Both sides started off with a bang. Two counter attacks from each side in the first five minutes had the 1000 strong crowd on their toes.

In the 7th minute, the standoff boiled over as a fast counter attack by the Lions had Dimce Panev in prime position for the opening goal. The Greens goalkeeper Glenn Clarke charged Panev on his shot. Referee Hakan Anaz awarded the Lions a penalty that Panev clinically put away.

The Greens marched straight back to retaliate. In the 9th minute Doug Mladenovic cleaned up on a defensive error and powered his shot uncontested past the guard of

George Tsianakis.

In the second half, the defence of both sides tightened as the stakes became increasing highs for the three points. Lions John Sapazovski had the Greens defence twice on the back foot with two blasts on goal. Having conceded only two goals this



season, Glenn Clarke was determined to stop the tally from rising. His efforts came at a price as the veteran was brought down with a bruised knee, forcing coach Garry Cole to put reserve keeper Spiro Tsetsos to guard the net after he had six blasted past him two hours earlier.

The breakthrough for the Greens arrived, when striker Juan Nilo struck the winning goal in the 79th minute to secure fourth spot for his side on the VPL ladder.

TOP SCORERS

AFTER ROUND 4

Player	Club	Goals
Peter Psarros	Port Melbourne Sharks	5
Nick Tsaltas	Port Melbourne Sharks	5
Alfonzo Opazo	Heidelberg United	3
John Dimitrelos	Altona East Phoenix	2
Juan Nilo	Bentleigh Greens	2
Warren Spink	Bulleen Zebras	2

RESULTS ROUND 4

Friday 23 February 2001

Altona Magic	2	St Albans Saints	3
(Todorovski, Bozinovski)		(Trupkovic, Tudor, Kelic)	
Heidelberg United	0	Altona East Phoenix	1
		(George Papadopoulos)	

Saturday 24 February 2001

Dandenong Thunder	2	Port Melbourne Sharks	4
(Caimakamis, Terek)		(Psarros, Pappas, Poutekidis, Tsaltas)	

VIC PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER (AFTER ROUND 4)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Port Melbourne Sharks	4	4	0	0	14	4	12
Altona East Phoenix	4	4	0	0	7	3	12
Heidelberg United	4	3	0	1	6	2	9
St. Albans Saints	3	2	0	1	7	5	6
Bentleigh Greens	3	1	2	0	4	1	5
Bulleen Zebras	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Green Gully Cavaliers	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Preston Lions	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
Essendon Royals	3	0	1	2	1	3	1
Fawkner Blues	3	0	1	2	2	6	1
Dandenong Thunder	4	0	1	3	4	10	1
Altona Magic	4	0	1	3	3	9	1

Victorian Premier League

ROUND 5

FRIDAY, 2ND MARCH

Port Melb Sharks vs Preston Lions S.S. Anderson Reserve
U21: 6.15pm • First Grade: 8.15pm

SATURDAY 3RD MARCH

Altona East Phoenix vs Essendon Paisley Reserve
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm
Bentleigh Greens vs Heidelberg Utd Kingston Heath Soccer Complex
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm
St Albans Saints vs South Dandenong Churchill Reserve
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm
Fawkner Blues vs Green Gully Cavalier C.B. Smith Reserve
U21: 3.00pm • First Grade: 5.00pm

MONDAY 5TH MARCH

Bulleen Zebras vs Altona Magic Veneto Club
U21: 6.15pm • First Grade: 8.15pm

For more information, log onto
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NSW Premier League



ROUND 15

Saints break Demon's run

Blacktown City	2
St George	4

By Stuart Veitch

After a record breaking unbeaten run of 33 consecutive matches, Blacktown City Demons were exposed as mortals after all, losing to a tenacious and committed St George for their first defeat in almost a year.

From the first whistle, Blacktown looked lacklustre and out of sorts, losing possession too easily and lacking any bite in the midfield.

After 18 minutes Paul Dee's strike was well blocked by Saints keeper Stacy Alogdellis, with the follow-up header going over the bar.

For the remainder of the half, all the Demons could manage in attack were some speculative crosses from the right side which were confidently dealt with by Alogdellis.

The Saints were tight in defence — Mark Bariamis standing out with committed tackling, and were effective in negat-



St George's Simon Verrender setting up teammate, George Maglis for the Saints' third goal.

ing the Demons strength out wide. Bill Petrovski in the centre played like a man possessed, and laid the foundations for the Saints success with his contribution both in attack and defence, relegating his counterparts in Damon Langan and Peter Sermanni to by-standers.

Archie Markopoulos failed to hit the target with a couple of early chances, but the Saints were beginning to look the goods.

On 22 minutes, Petrovski, Maglis and Markopoulos all combined with a series of one touch passes down the left side, concluding with Petrovski setting up Petratos who blasted just wide.

A moment later, the Saints opened the scoring, when Mirek Bacek supplied Nick Bolianitis with a cross to score at the near post after a short corner.

The second half began as a baptism of fire for replacement keeper James Wilkinson, for the Saints had doubled their lead within three minutes of the restart. In a move which typified the midfield battle, the Saints' Petrovski robbed a flat-footed Damon Langan, then ran at the Demons defence before laying off to Markopoulos whose smash rocketed into the roof of the net.

Blacktown weren't done yet however, with Jimmy Aschner managing to pull one back on 57 minutes, striking home a low Paul Dee cross with one touch.

Blacktown City sensed their psychological advantage and sought to capitalise, pressing forward, and creating their best chances for the game.

However, Saints keeper Alogdellis stepped up to the challenge, and made a series of crucial saves. The first came at the feet of Steve Riches after a smart interchange of passes between Riches and Angievski, with the most spectacular save a leap to his left to lay a finger-tip to a goal bound Peter Sermanni strike.

At 77 minutes, some breathing space was afforded to the Saints, when George Maglis received the ball from Simon Verrender. Maglis whipped the ball across his body from 18 yards, striking it just inside the near post to make it 3-1. Six minutes later the result was beyond doubt when a quality Michael

Kladis strike gave the Saints a three goal lead. A late penalty for Demons was converted by Damon Langan after a foul on Aschner, but was little more than a consolation.

WRAP-UP

CANTERBURY 4 PARRAMATTA 1

Canterbury fans witnessed an inspiring 'hit and run' performance on Friday night, with their side netting three first half goals and in the process running away with the points against the second-placed Parramatta Eagles, taking out the match 4-1.

Con Paradisis, Archie Kotsopoulos, Andy Amegashie and John Pillemer were the scorers for the home side, while Daniel Cummins was the lone goal-scorer for Parramatta Eagles.

PENRITH 1 LEICHHARDT 3

The Leichhardt Tigers kept their semi-final hopes alive disposing of a gallant Penrith 3-1 at Andrews Road Field. Leichhardt scored three goals in the final ten minutes to put pay to a committed Panthers outfit that had led for the majority of the match via a Jason Sciberras strike in the 22nd minute.

Led by substitute Steve Karavatakis with two goals and striker Mathew Borg with his side's third, the Tigers showed their class in the last ten minutes to run away with all three points.

BONNYRIGG W.E. 2 BELCONNEN 1

Belconnen came into this game needing points to keep their finals hopes alive, whereas Bonnyrigg look safe for a play-off spot. This game was deservedly won by the White Eagles though they probably should have had more goals and left it late to get all 3 points. Belconnen defended deep and reverted to the long

ball and the chances they had either came from set pieces or strong individual runs.

CENTRAL COAST 1 SUTHERLAND 0

A 73rd minute strike by Mick Coates secured all three points against bottom club Sutherland at Plum Park on Saturday night.

Sutherland belied their status with a fine performance against a team pushing for the top four, but were punished for some poor finishing when Coates hammered home from close range after Mick Williams had seen his header hit the upright. With three games to go the Coasties are just one point away from a finals spot, while Sutherland remains the only team without a win in the NSW Premier League.

RESULTS

ROUND 15

St George Saints 4	Blacktown City 2
(N Bolianitis 27m)	(J Aschner 56,
A Markopoulos 46m)	D Langan 85m pen)
G Maglis 80m M Kladis 82m)	
Canterbury M'ville 4	Parramatta Eagles 1
(C Paradisis 31m)	(D Cummins 69m)
A Amegashie 32m	
A Kotsopoulos 38m J Pillemer 90m)	
Central Coast Coasties 1	Sutherland Sharks 0
(M Coates 72m)	
Bonnyrigg W.E. 2	Belconnen Blue Devils 1
(D Reid 17m J Ghiso 85m)	(G Howarth 80m)
Penrith Panthers 1	Leichhardt Tigers 3
(J Sciberras 22m)	(S Karavatakis 82/84m
	M Borg 89m)

TOP SCORERS

AFTER ROUND 15

Player	Club	Goals
Darren Iocca	BLACKTOWN	14
Steve Lazzari	BELCONNEN	12
Javier Mancino	BONNYRIGG W.E.	9
Adam Anderson	PARRAMATTA EAGLES	9

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER (AFTER ROUND 15)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blacktown City	15	11	3	1	42	18	36
Parramatta Eagles	15	10	1	4	36	25	31
Bonnyrigg	15	7	5	3	35	21	26
Leichhardt	15	7	2	6	36	29	23
St George	15	7	1	7	25	28	22
Central Coast	15	7	1	7	16	19	22
Canterbury-M'ville	15	6	3	6	24	24	21
Belconnen	15	6	2	7	27	28	20
Penrith	15	1	3	11	11	38	6
Sutherland	15	0	5	10	10	32	5

For further information see: www.nswpremierleague.com



NSW Premier League

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ROUND 16

FRIDAY 2ND MARCH

St George Saints v Penrith
Under 19s: 6.00pm

ST GEORG STADIUM
First Grade: 8.00pm

SATURDAY 3RD MARCH

Blacktown v Central Coast
Sutherland v Bonnyrigg W.E.
Under 19s: 5.00pm
Belconnen v Canterbury
Under 19s: 2.00pm

GABBIE STADIUM
SEYMOUR SHAW
First Grade: 7.00pm
BRUCE STADIUM/AIS Field
First Grade: 4.00pm

SUNDAY 4TH MARCH

Parramatta Eagles v Leichhardt
Under 19s: 4.30pm

MELITA STADIUM
First Grade: 6.30pm

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Ante Deur: Sydney United Hotshot

By Mark Stavroulakis

He may well wear the dreaded number 13 for his current club Sydney United, but 21-year-old Ante Deur has certainly defied the odds of having a bad luck this season. Having figured in almost the entire season so far for the 'Bravehearts', Ante is really experiencing the highs of soccer at the moment.

As a junior, young Ante started his football at his beloved United. "I played for Sydney United in the Under 13's, 15's and played reserve grade at the age of 16. In the 14's I had a tint with Southern Districts, but I can safely say that I'm a united boy through and through. Starting at the club as a junior was great as I was around so many good players and coaches who looked after me. For me, the junior years of soccer were the best ones," said the young gun.

Many achievements had rose from then on for young 'Dewey', as he was selected for the Under 15's NSW National squad for his achievements at his club. "It was a great honor playing for NSW as you got to play against the best players in your age group. We won the National Titles two-nil at Parklea against Victoria. Winning the Nationals was very special to me as it goes down as the first major title that I had

won with a team," said Deur.

State honors were then followed by National honors as Deur was chosen for the '96 Australian U17 squad. "It's the greatest honor that I've achieved so far in my short career, representing your country is by all means the best achievement you can have in any sport. Being involved with players like Nick Carle, Jason Culina, Marco Bresciano and a heap more stars was great.

Unfortunately we failed to qualify for the World Cup Finals in Egypt that year losing our final Oceania play-off against New Zealand one-nil. It was a disappointing day for the whole team, as we all knew that the World Cup was so close but yet the result went against us. However, it was an experience I will never forget and one that I will cherish for a long time," said the former '96 Joey.

After representing Australia, Deur then spent a year at the famous AIS, where the young lad experienced a first hand look at professionalism at it's best. "I was 17-years-old, coming back from the qualifiers with the Joeys, I was selected to be part of the AIS. Steve O'Connor was the coach who really was one of the best I've ever had. The squad was of high quality, also the facilities were of International standard.

Overall it was a place that I'll always remember as giving me that extra edge in becoming the professional that I am today, it

taught me many things not only in soccer, but about life as well," said the AIS graduate.

Although not linked to a club overseas yet, Deur did play for Croatia Zagreb as an 18-year-old. "After spending 1-year at the AIS, I really wanted to try my luck overseas. Croatia Zagreb were interested in me and I trialed for the club through the help of former Melbourne Knights coach Mirko Bazic who is head of Youth over there. He liked what he saw and signed me for two seasons where I played for the reserve side. The coaching was high quality and the players were also of top class. It was an experience that I'll always have as it was my first ever overseas club and I had a first hand look at how I fared with the rest," said the former Croatia Zagreb midfielder.

Early this season, Sydney United had the pleasure of welcoming back one of their favorite sons to the team he starred as a junior. "I came back to United as I felt that I had to play a couple more seasons in Australia before moving overseas again. I signed a 2-year deal, currently in my first season and I know that through good performances I can develop as a player more," said 'Dewey'.

So far this season, Ante has played 15 times for the red and whites and has done considerably well. "It's always good playing week in week out as it's the only way you can improve as a player. I've scored three times,



Ante Deur: Sydney United revelation.

and my most memorable goal would have to be the one against Eastern Pride where I scored the only goal to help the side gain three points at Edensor Park. It was a right foot rocket, one that I won't forget in a long time," said Deur.

Ante believes that the squad has what it takes to make the top six come end of the year. "We have a mixture of young and old players who blend in well.

The atmosphere is really friendly everyone always gives 100% in each game no matter the score line. Having Alan Hunter also is good as he motivates all the boys and really pumps the players up.

EX-ALTONA COACH, PRESIDENT IN WAR OF WORDS

By Bert van Bedaf

Former Altona Magic coach Tim Bikicki has accused the vice-president of the Victorian Premier League club, Millissa Fischer-Massa, of having a conflict of interest since she is also president of rival club Bentleigh Greens.

A former coach of Kuwait, in 1995 and 1996, Bikicki stepped down as Magic coach last weekend after meeting with committee members.

"I've resigned. I was not prepared to further destroy my reputation I have built over the years. The type of people I've encountered at Altona Magic are working on the demise of soccer," Bikicki said.

Under Bikicki, bottom-side Altona Magic lost 2-1 to neighbour Altona East, drew 0-0 with Bentleigh Greens and lost 4-0 to Port Melbourne Friday before last. Altona appointed Frank McGrellis as coach for the rest of the season last Sunday week. McGrellis lost his first game in charge 3-2 to St Albans last Friday night.

The season before last McGrellis was assistant coach at Bulleen Millissa Fischer-Massa announced the new appointment last Sunday week.

"The committee appointed Frank McGrellis as coach. He used to be with Gary Cole and we wanted him and he's decided," she said.

Commenting on Bikicki's departure, Fischer-Massa said, "He was never my choice anyway. We let him have a go, but he wasn't doing very well, obviously."

When asked, whether three matches was a fair length of time to judge, Fischer-Massa said, "It doesn't matter, we already knew what's wrong. When you're not winning, you have to go. With the players we've got and they're not performing, there must be something wrong."

During last week, Altona captain and goal keeper Darren McGrath suggested Bikicki had difficulty coming to terms with the VPL, saying, "He struggled with the style that is played in the league."

The Altona committee appointed Bikicki before Fischer-Massa rejoined the club as vice-president. The Magic won championships with her as president in

1996 and 1997 (with Cole as coach).

Bikicki, who played for Altona in the 1980s and was assistant coach to Drago Sekularac at former NSL clubs Footscray JUST and Heidelberg United (now in the VPL), was bitter about his split with the Magic.

He alleged Fischer-Massa was behind his departure and questioned her dual roles at Altona and Bentleigh.

"There's a conflict of interest and I was not prepared to wear that. The VSF (Victorian Soccer Federation) knows about it. I'm disappointed, they're not doing anything about it. That's an unhealthy circumstance," Bikicki said. VSF chief executive Geoff Miles said there was nothing in the federation statutes that prevented anyone from having a role at more than one club.

"It is a very unusual situation. She has been a big supporter of soccer at premier league level and made a big commitment to the clubs she's been involved with," Miles said.

"There is nothing in the rules that prevents someone from holding an interest or involvement in more than one club and the people involved will have an understanding of their responsibilities and act accordingly," he said. She rejected Bikicki's claims there was a conflict of interest. "Not at all. I want Bentleigh to win the championship and Altona to come second. I prefer Bentleigh to be my number one (club). I can't see Altona win it, but if they do, I'll be just as happy. I can't lose either way," Fischer-Massa said.

"I can't see Altona reach number one. But if they do come in the top four of five and they fight it out with Bentleigh in the end, whichever club wins I'll be just as happy."

"But I'd love to give Bentleigh a (championship) flag. We were so close last year, by a point. I'd love Bentleigh to win it, because they haven't got it (a title) and Altona won three in a row and I was part of it," she said. Victoria's most mercurial VPL president, who owns a string of nursing homes, was also involved with former premier league club Springvale White Eagles and State League club Ringwood City. About four years ago, she was thinking of joining the board of NSL club Melbourne Knights but changed her mind.

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE SOUTHERN DIVISION - RD 18

LEADING SCORERS

Name	Team	Goals
Steve Mancevski	South Melbourne	24
Denis Mustac	Eastern Pride	14
Nick Waite	Peninsula Blues	13
Aref El Dib	South Melb Eagles Ac	10
Brett Cunningham	Fawkner Blues	9
Viktor Memeti	South Dandenong	9
Daniel Debevc	Carlton	8
Josip Loncaric	Melbourne Knights	8

LEAGUE LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eastern Pride	15	12	1	2	48	11	37
South Melb Institute	16	14	0	2	84	20	42
Eastern Pride	17	13	2	2	58	15	41
Melbourne Knights	15	11	0	4	43	19	33
Peninsula Blues	15	10	0	5	41	18	30
VIS	18	9	3	6	38	31	30
Melb Knights Academy	15	7	1	7	19	24	22
South Dandenong	15	6	2	7	26	29	20
South Melbourne EA	15	6	2	7	28	33	20
Green Gully Cavaliers	16	4	4	8	20	32	16
Bulleen Zebras	16	3	4	9	23	40	13
Albury Wodonga	16	3	3	10	15	43	12
Fawkner Blues	15	3	1	11	20	52	10
Preston Lions	15	2	0	13	17	76	6

By Roy Hay

South Melbourne Eagles Academy 4 Eastern Pride 4

In a thriller at Keilor Park, South Melbourne Eagles Academy came within seconds of knocking off Eastern Pride in Round 18 but the Pride scored to leave the teams locked at four all and the fans in a frenzy. Ante Deak put the Pride in front in the very first minute, and Denis Mustac increased the lead to two in twenty minutes.

The Eagles started to fight back through Vince Zafferano after 36 minutes, but Mustac scored again in 45, his fourteenth of the season.

Aref El Dib pulled another goal back for the Eagles, then came a frantic last ten minutes in which Sam Arico leveled the scores at three-all, before El Dib seemed to have clinched the game for the Eagles with his second goal in the 89th minute. Milos Petrevski popped up to grab the equalizer for the visitors

as the referee was about to blow for full time.

South Melbourne 7 Fawkner Blues 0

Steve Mancevski looks set to break the goal-scoring record in the National Youth League with another five goals in a brilliant individual performance as South Melbourne Institute beat Fawkner Blues by seven goals to nil at Bob Jane Stadium on Monday night in Round 17.

That takes Mancevski to 24 for the season from only fifteen games. It was four-nil at the break and the other goals for South Melbourne were scored by Vince Lia and Okan Simsek.

Bulleen Zebras 1 South Dandenong 0

This match on Wednesday was switched to C B Smith Reserve and Bulleen won by the goal of the game, which turned out to be an own goal conceded by South Dandenong.

ROUND 17 & 18 RESULTS

Monday 19 February 2001 Sth Melbourne 7 Fawkner Blues 0 (Steve Mancevski 5, Vince Lia, Okan Simsek) Wednesday 21 February Bulleen Zebras 1 Sth Dandenong 0 (own goal) Sunday 25 February Sth Melb Eagles Academy 4 (Aref El Dib 2, Vince Zafferano, Sam Arico) Eastern Pride 4 (Denis Mustac 2, Ante Deak, Milos Petrevski) ... Melbourne Knights 1 (Xzchair)	Suleimani) South Melbourne 3 (Vince Lia 2, Theo Petidis) Albury-Wodonga 1 (Elliot Jones) VIS 3 (Billy Celestik, Frank Lagana, Ricky Chillico) South Dandenong 4 Green Gully 5 No details available Wednesday 28 February Bulleen Zebras v Peninsula Blues (Veneto Club, 7 pm) Bye v Melbourne Knights Academy Bye v Preston Lions Bye v Fawkner Blues
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ROUND 18 & 19 FIXTURES

Wednesday 28 February 2001 Bulleen Zebras v Peninsula Blues, (C B Smith Reserve, 7 pm) Friday 2 March 2001 Peninsula Blues v South Dandenong, (Lawton Reserve, 6 pm) Melbourne Knights Academy v Fawkner Blues, (Knights Stadium, 7.30 pm)	Saturday 3 March 2001 VIS v Sth Melb Eagles Academy, (The Grange Reserve, 4 pm) Preston Lions v South Melbourne, (BT Connor Reserve, 4 pm) Green Gully v Albury-Wodonga, (Green Gully Reserve, 5 pm) Eastern Pride v Bye Bulleen Zebras v Bye Melbourne Knights v Bye
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NORTHERN DIVISION - RD 20

FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2001

Newcastle United Youth ...4	Northern Spirit 4
QAS 0	Wollongong Wolves ..2

SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2001

Canberra Cosmos* 1	Parramatta Power* ..3
AIS 4	NSWIS 1

SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2001

Marconi Stallions Colts ...2	Sydney Olympic 1
Marconi Stallions Youth ..4	Sydney United 0
ACT Academy 0	Newcastle Utd Colts ..1

Bye — Sydney Olympic Youth

FIXTURES:

NSWIS Vs ACT Academy	Valentine Sports Park
Canberra Cosmos Vs Newcastle United Youth	AIS Soccer Field
Wollongong Wolves Vs Parramatta Power	WIN Stadium
Sydney United Vs Sydney Olympic Academy	Sydney United Sports Centre
Northern Spirit Vs AIS	Christie Park
QAS Vs Marconi Stallions Colts	Ballymore
Sydney Olympic Youth Vs Marconi Stallions Youth	Belmore Sports Ground
BYE Newcastle United Colts	

	P	W	D	B	L	F	A	Pts
A.I.S.	19	16	2	1	1	56	21	50
Parramatta Power	19	12	2	1	5	56	29	38
Marconi Stallions	16	11	2	1	3	38	11	36
Newcastle United	17	10	2	1	5	35	20	32
Northern Spirit	17	10	2	1	5	37	24	32
Wollongong Wolves	16	9	4	2	3	35	15	31
Sydney Olympic	17	9	2	2	6	42	34	29
Sydney United	18	8	1	2	9	35	36	25
Canberra Cosmos	18	7	3	2	8	38	31	24
Marconi Stallions Colts	17	8	0	2	9	37	31	24
N.S.W.I.S.	19	7	2	1	10	23	41	23
Q.A.S.	19	7	1	1	11	30	51	22
Sydney Olympic Ac	18	2	4	1	12	21	41	10
Newcastle United Colts	17	2	0	1	15	12	47	6
ACT Academy	19	1	1	1	17	8	68	4



South Australian 2001 Premier League Draw



ROUND 1

Saturday, March 31

Blue Eagles v Port Lion
Croydon Kings v Campbelltown
Playford Patriots v White City Woodville
Port Pirie Spirit v Metro Stars
Olympic FC v Modbury Jets
Adelaide City v Raiders

ROUND 2

Friday, April 6

Modbury Jets v Blue Eagles
Saturday, April 7
Port Lion v Adelaide City
White City Woodville v Port Pirie Spirit
Metro Stars v Olympic FC
Campbelltown v Playford Patriots
Raiders v Croydon Kings

ROUND 3

Thursday, April 12

Port Lion v Modbury Jets

Saturday, April 14

Blue Eagles v Metro Stars
Port Pirie Spirit v Campbelltown
Olympic FC v White City Woodville
Adelaide City v Croydon Kings
Playford Patriots v Raiders

ROUND 4

Friday, April 20

Modbury Jets v Adelaide City

Saturday, April 21

Metro Stars v Port Lion
White City Woodville v Blue Eagles
Campbelltown v Olympic FC
Raiders v Port Pirie Spirit
Croydon Kings v Playford Patriots

ROUND 5

Friday, April 27

Modbury Jets v Metro Stars

Saturday, April 28

Blue Eagles v Campbelltown
Port Lion v White City Woodville
Adelaide City v Playford Patriots
Port Pirie Spirit v Croydon Kings
Olympic FC v Raiders

ROUND 6

Saturday, May 5

Metro Stars v Adelaide City
White City Woodville v Modbury Jets
Campbelltown v Port Lion
Raiders v Blue Eagles
Croydon Kings v Olympic FC
Playford Patriots v Port Pirie Spirit

ROUND 7

Friday, May 11

Blue Eagles v Croydon Kings

Saturday, May 12

Modbury Jets v Campbelltown
Port Lion v Raiders
Metro Stars v White City Woodville
Olympic FC v Playford Patriots
Adelaide City v Port Pirie Spirit

ROUND 8

Saturday, May 19

White City Woodville v Adelaide City
Campbelltown v Metro Stars

Raiders v Modbury Jets
Croydon Kings v Port Lion
Playford Patriots v Blue Eagles
Port Pirie Spirit v Olympic FC

ROUND 9

Friday, May 25

Modbury Jets v Croydon Kings

Saturday, May 26

Blue Eagles v Port Pirie Spirit
Port Lion v Playford Patriots
Metro Stars v Raiders
White City v Campbelltown
Adelaide City v Olympic FC

ROUND 10

Saturday, June 2

Campbelltown v Adelaide City
Raiders v White City Woodville
Croydon Kings v Metro Stars
Playford Patriots v Modbury Jets
Port Pirie Spirit v Port Lion
Olympic FC v Blue Eagles

ROUND 11

Friday, June 8

Blue Eagles v Adelaide City

Saturday, June 9

Port Lion v Olympic FC
Modbury Jets v Port Pirie Spirit
Metro Stars v Playford Patriots
White City Woodville v Croydon Kings
Campbelltown v Raiders



Steve Maxwell: Hill Hawks prolific midfielder.

ROUND 12

Friday, June 15

Modbury Jets v Olympic FC

Saturday, June 16

Port Lion v Blue Eagles
Campbelltown v Croydon Kings
White City Woodville v Playford Patriots
Metro Stars v Port Pirie Spirit
Raiders v Adelaide City

ROUND 13

Friday, June 22

Blue Eagles v Modbury Jets

Saturday, June 23

Adelaide City v Port Lion
Olympic FC v Metro Stars
Port Pirie Spirit v White City Woodville
Playford Patriots v Campbelltown
Croydon Kings v Raiders

ROUND 14

Friday, June 29

Modbury Jets v Port Lion

Saturday, June 30

Metro Stars v Blue Eagles
Raiders v Playford Patriots
Campbelltown v Port Pirie Spirit
White City Woodville v Olympic FC
Croydon Kings v Adelaide City

ROUND 15

Saturday, July 7

Adelaide City v Modbury Jets
Port Lion v Metro Stars
Blue Eagles v White City Woodville
Olympic FC v Campbelltown
Port Pirie Spirit v Raiders
Playford Patriots v Croydon Kings

ROUND 16

Saturday, July 14

Campbelltown v Blue Eagles
White City Woodville v Port Lion
Metro Stars v Modbury Jets
Croydon Kings v Port Pirie Spirit
Raiders v Olympic FC
Playford Patriots v Adelaide City

ROUND 17

Friday, July 20

Blue Eagles v Raiders

Saturday, July 21

Adelaide City v Metro Stars
Modbury Jets v White City Woodville
Port Lion v Campbelltown
Olympic FC v Croydon Kings
Port Pirie Spirit v Playford Patriots

ROUND 18

Saturday, July 28

Croydon Kings v Blue Eagles

Raiders v Port Lion

Campbelltown v Modbury Jets
White City Woodville v Metro Stars
Playford Patriots v Olympic FC
Port Pirie Spirit v Adelaide City

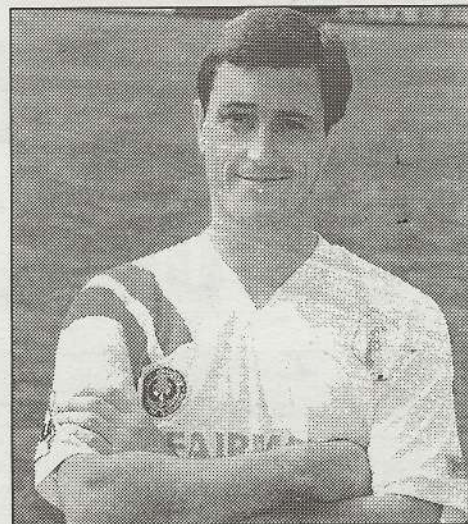
ROUND 19

Friday, August 4

Modbury Jets v Raiders

Saturday, August 5

Adelaide City v White City Woodville



Phil Scardigno: Croydon Kings coach.

Metro Stars v Campbelltown
Port Lion v Croydon Kings
Blue Eagles v Playford Patriots
Olympic FC v Port Pirie Spirit.

ROUND 20

Saturday, August 11

Port Pirie Spirit v Blue Eagles
Playford Patriots v Port Lion
Croydon Kings v Modbury Jets
Raiders v Metro Stars
Campbelltown v White City Woodville
Olympic FC v Adelaide City

ROUND 21

Friday, August 17

Modbury Jets v Playford Patriots

Saturday, August 18

Adelaide City v Campbelltown
White City Woodville v Raiders
Metro Stars v Croydon Kings
Port Lion v Port Pirie Spirit
Blue Eagles v Olympic FC

ROUND 22

Saturday, August 25

Adelaide City v Blue Eagles
Olympic FC v Port Lion
Port Pirie Spirit v Modbury Jets
Playford Patriots v Metro Stars
Croydon Kings v White City Woodville
Raiders v Campbelltown

PREMIER AND STATE LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS

ELIMINATION AND QUALIFICATION FINALS

SEPTEMBER 8TH AND 9TH

FIRST AND SECOND SEMI-FINALS

15TH AND 16TH SEPTEMBER

PRELIMINARY FINALS

22ND SEPTEMBER

GRAND FINALS

28TH SEPTEMBER

WEST END FEDERATION CUP DATES

Round 1: Saturday, March 24

Round 2: Monday, April 16

Quarter-finals: Monday, May 21

Semi-finals: Monday, June 11

Cup Final: Saturday, September 1



EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE



GROUP A



Kily Gonzalez, celebrating Valencia's equaliser against Manchester United.

Tuesday, February 20
Manchester Utd 1 Valencia 1
 Andy Cole 12 Wes Brown 88og
 Halftime: 1-0; Attendance: 66,715

Panathinaikos 1 Sturm Graz 2
 Ioannis Goumas, 73 Markus Schopp 25,
 Mario Haas 41
 Halftime: 0-2; Attendance: 20,000

Table										
Manchester Utd	4	2	2	0	6	2	8			
Valencia	4	1	3	0	3	1	6			
Sturm Graz	4	2	0	2	4	5	6			
Panathinaikos	4	0	1	3	2	7	1			

Past Results:
Wednesday, December 6
 Panathinaikos 0 Valencia 0
 Sturm Graz 0 Manchester Utd 2

Wednesday, February 14
 Sturm Graz 2 Panathinaikos 0
 Valencia 0 Manchester Utd 0

Remaining Fixtures:
 Wednesday, March 7
 Sturm Graz v Valencia
 Panathinaikos v Manchester United

Tuesday, March 13
 Valencia v Panathinaikos
 Manchester United v Sturm Graz

GROUP B

Dep. Coruna 2 Galatasaray 0
 Victor 40,
 Djalminha 73
 Halftime: 1-0; Attendance: 31,000
 Red card: Vedat Inceefe (Galatasaray) 58

PSG 1 AC Milan 1
 Laurent Robert 75 Jose Mari 90
 Halftime: 0-0; Attendance: 41,450

Tuesday, February 20
Dep. Coruna 2 Galatasaray 0
PSG 1 AC Milan 1

Table										
Galatasaray	4	2	1	1	4	4	7			
AC Milan	4	1	3	0	5	4	6			
Deportivo Coruna	4	2	0	2	5	3	6			
Paris St Germain	4	0	2	2	3	6	2			

Past Results:
Tuesday, November 21
 AC Milan 2 Galatasaray 2
 Paris St Germain 1 Deportivo Coruna 3

Wednesday, December 6
 Deportivo Coruna 0 AC Milan 1
 Galatasaray 1 Paris St Germain 0

Wednesday, February 14
 Galatasaray 1 Deportivo Coruna 0
 AC Milan 1 Paris St Germain 1

Remaining Fixtures:
 Wednesday, March 7
 Galatasaray v AC Milan
 Deportivo Coruna v Paris St Germain

Tuesday, March 13
 AC Milan v Deportivo Coruna
 Paris St Germain v Galatasaray



Nicholas Anelka, PSG's phenomenal attacker.

GROUP C



Arsenal striker, Kanu in full flight against Lyon.

Wednesday, February 21
Arsenal 1 Olympique Lyon 1
 Dennis Bergkamp 33 Edmilson 90
 Halftime: 1-0; Attendance: 34,303

Spartak Moscow 0 Bayern Munich 3
 M. Scholl 17, 75pen,
 P. Sergio 87
 Halftime: 0-1; Attendance: 60,000

Table										
Bayern Munich	4	3	1	0	7	2	10			
Arsenal	4	1	2	1	5	7	5			
Olympique Lyon	4	1	1	2	4	3	4			
Spartak Moscow	4	1	0	3	4	8	3			

Past Results:
Tuesday, December 5
 Arsenal 2 Bayern Munich 2
 Olympique Lyon 3 Spartak Moscow 0

Tuesday, February 13
 Olympique Lyon 0 Arsenal 1
 Bayern Munich 1 Spartak Moscow 0

Remaining Fixtures:
 Tuesday, March 6
 Olympique Lyon v Bayern Munich
 Arsenal v Spartak Moscow

Wednesday, March 14
 Bayern Munich v Arsenal
 Spartak Moscow v Olympique Lyon

GROUP D

Wednesday, February 21
Lazio 2 Real Madrid 2
 Pavel Nedved 4, Solari 32,
 Hernan Crespo 53 Raul 73
 Halftime: 1-1; Attendance: 60,000

Anderlecht 1 Leeds United 4
 Jan Koller 75 Alan Smith 12, 37,
 Mark Viduka 33,
 Ian Harte 80pen
 Halftime: 0-3; Attendance: 28,000

Table										
Real Madrid	4	3	1	0	11	5	10			
Leeds United	4	3	0	1	7	4	9			
Anderlecht	4	1	0	3	4	10	3			
Lazio	4	0	1	3	4	7	1			

Real Madrid and Leeds United qualify for quarter-finals

Past Results:
Tuesday, December 5
 Lazio 0 Leeds United 1
 Real Madrid 4 Anderlecht 1
Tuesday, February 13
 Real Madrid 3 Lazio 2
 Leeds United 2 Anderlecht 1

Remaining Fixtures:

Tuesday, March 6
 Real Madrid v Leeds United
 Lazio v Anderlecht

Wednesday, March 14
 Leeds United v Lazio
 Anderlecht v Real Madrid

*Top two in each group qualify for the quarter-finals.



Alan Smith celebrating one of his goals against Anderlecht.

KLUIVERT DENIES THREAT TO QUIT BARCELONA

Barcelona striker Patrick Kluivert was forced into a damage limitation exercise last week after comments he made over the position of the coach were taken as being an ultimatum to the club.

The Dutch international striker said in a news conference earlier in the day that he would have to know who is going to be the Catalan club's new

coach before deciding whether to sign an extension to his contract.

Current boss Llorenç Serra Ferrer is widely expected to revert to the position of technical director at the end of the current season, making way for a new head coach.

"I have to speak to Barcelona about my situation and it will be important to know who the coach is before making a decision," said the Dutch inter-

national, whose contract expires at the end of the 2001-02 season.

"I think that's normal practice for any professional, not just me."

Those comments prompted radio, television and internet reports from the voracious media pack suggesting Kluivert was saying he would leave the club unless Serra Ferrer was replaced.

But after a meeting with the coach

Kluivert immediately gave an interview to the club's dedicated television channel to clarify his position.

"My comments were misunderstood," Kluivert told Canal Barça.

"They weren't meant to be against the coach. We have a professional relationship."

"I just meant that I have a year on my contract and I have to think about my future."

Pasarella Quits as Uruguay Coach

Daniel Passarella quit as coach of neighboring Uruguay's national team last week, blaming a dispute with local club Nacional.

"I want to apologize to the people of Uruguay but the way things were, I think it was necessary," said Passarella, who captained his own country when they won the 1978 World Cup and coached them at the World Cup in France two years ago.

Passarella, who has frequently complained about a lack of time to train his squad, blamed

"differences with the directors of Nacional" for his decision.

He had named Nacional's Vicente Sanchez to the squad for a brief tour to Europe for which Uruguay were due to leave late last week.

He discovered last week Monday the player had gone with his club, who are reigning Uruguayan champions, to Chile for a Libertadores Cup match against Concepcion.

Passarella's departure, one month before a crucial match at home to Paraguay, is a bitter blow to

Uruguay's chances of qualifying for the World Cup for the first time since 1990.

Uruguay are fifth in the South American qualifying group, from which four teams qualify directly for Japan and South Korea in 2002 and the fifth plays off against the winners of the Oceania region.

Uruguay were once a force in world Soccer, winning two of the first four World Cups, but have declined dramatically in recent years.



Patrick Kluivert: Denies threatening Barcelona.

FERGUSON LAMENTS GIGGS' INJURY WOES

Manchester United coach, Sir Alex Ferguson insisted last week that an injury to winger Ryan Giggs had damaged his side's chances of beating last season's losing finalists.

Manchester United came within two minutes of a place in the Champions League quarter-finals last week before ending up with a 1-1 draw against Valencia.

The result still left Alex Ferguson's side top of Group A, with eight points from four games

— but without the mathematical certainty of going through.

Giggs set up Cole's opener, but limped off soon after following a recurrence of his persistent hamstring injury.

Ferguson said: "It was unfortunate we had to change the shape of our team."

"When Ryan was on the field he looked a big threat and while their plan was designed to kill the width in our game, Ryan found the answer to that and even made the first goal."

The injury also ruled him out of the big premier league clash with Arsenal last Sunday.

Ferguson refused to blame Brown for the own goal, saying: "We are disappointed to concede a late goal and it was unfortunate for Wes."

"It won't affect him though. He knows he's playing a man's game and these things happen."

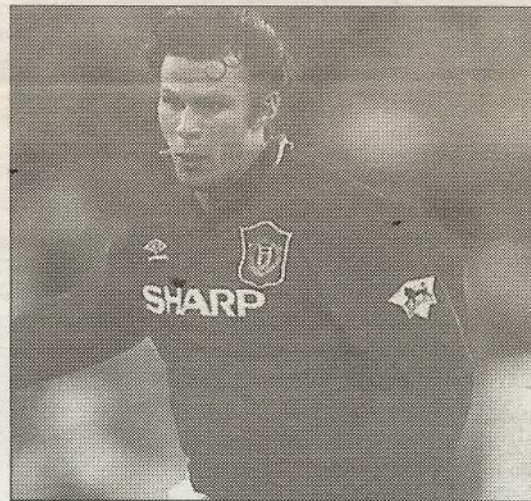
Ferguson added: "We tend to make things difficult for ourselves but we respond to the last call."

But even then coach Hector Cuper would have guided Valencia

to a surprise victory but for a goal-line clearance from Paul Scholes to keep out Ruben Baraja's header.

Cuper said: "Yes, it was possible — we could have got three points but at the end of the day we got one point here."

"It was always going to be difficult to get back into the game once United had taken the lead. However we took our opportunity and you have to go away happy with a point. A draw is important because it puts our future in our hands."



Ryan Giggs: Forced out of Champions League by injury.

Thuram plans to dump Parma

French international defender Lilian Thuram is considering leaving Italian Serie A side Parma at the end of the season.

Thuram, who has a contract with Parma until 2005, was quoted in the tabloid Le Parisien as saying he was anxious to win the Italian title.

Parma are currently fifth in the Italian League, 16 points behind leaders Roma.

"I'm going to have to think seriously about it," Thuram said. "It is true that I'd love to win the title with Parma, but on the other hand, I'm 29 years old."

"I'm going to have to take a close look at the situation and then make the necessary decisions."

Former Monaco lynchpin Thuram has been sought by both Roma and AC Milan and told the paper it was possible he could end up with one those teams next season.

"It is possible," he said. "You

know that in football anything is possible. But for now I'm with Parma and I don't want to escape or think about next season."



Lilian Thuram

JUVE BOSS WANTS REFEREES FINED

Juventus director general Luciano Moggi says referees could perform better if they faced fines for their mistakes.

"I know refereeing a match

is very difficult as you have to take a decision in few seconds," Moggi said.

"But in the case of really big errors we need to find some innovation to deal with the problem."

"A referee who makes a huge mistake could even be fined."

Probably then there would be greater concentration and fewer errors.

"I think this would be logical — players and other people who work for clubs are fined when they make mistakes, so why not also the referees?"

Juventus's rivals have long claimed that the Turin club have benefitted from referees' mistakes and there was a huge outcry last season when Parma had a goal disallowed in a crucial game at Juve's Delle Alpi stadium.

But this season Moggi has been keen to highlight decisions which have gone against Juventus and also mistakes

which might have helped their rivals.

"We saw lot of mistakes, for example during Roma-Bari,

Roma-Lecce and even Atalanta-Juventus," Moggi said.

VICENZA BANISHED

Serie A team Vicenza played last Sunday's home match against AS Roma on a neutral ground at Udine after a policeman was badly injured by travelling Vicenza fans last weekend.

The Italian League ruled last week that Vicenza's Stadium could not be used because of violence during their 1-1 Serie A draw with Atalanta Bergamo.

The policeman had to have a finger amputated after he picked up a home-made bomb hurled from the

terraces on Sunday. The bomb exploded in his hand.

An Italian league official criticised the violence, saying: "The extent of the damage is indicative of the level of criminality of acts carried out by one or more fans."

Penultimate Thursday's fourth round first leg UEFA cup tie between Roma and Liverpool was also marred by violence.

Ten British fans were taken to hospital with stab wounds before the match which the Rome side lost 2-0.



Ugo Ehiogu: In the cooler.

EHIUGU HIT WITH FOUR MATCH BAN

Middlesbrough's record eight million pound defender Ugo Ehiogu will miss four key relegation matches after being banned by the Football Association.

Ehiogu was sent off for the second time this season against Wimbledon in an FA Cup fourth round replay penultimate week, prompting a suspension of four matches rather than the usual three for violent conduct.

"It's frustrating," Middlesbrough coach Terry Venables told the club's website.

"With Keith O'Neill and Colin Cooper also out we've got some thinking to do. In our situation it is something we could have done without."

The 28-year-old will miss home clashes with Charlton Athletic and Sunderland, as well as tricky away trips to Chelsea and Newcastle United.

ENGLISH PREMIERSHIP

MAN. UTD 6 ARSENAL 1

Dwight Yorke scored a 20-minute hat-trick as United crushed their nearest rivals Arsenal to move 16 points clear.

Yorke's third treble in the first 20 minutes plus goals from Roy Keane and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer earned them a 5-1

half-time lead and substitute Teddy Sheringham completed the rout in the 90th minute.

Thierry Henry had earlier cancelled out Yorke's third minute opener, but Arsenal defended poorly to all but hand the title

to United for the third consecutive season.

BRADFORD CITY 1 WEST HAM UTD 2

Bradford looked way off the premier league pace again with another poor display while West Ham's young midfield again looked full of ideas.

Frank Lampard, after a neat back-heel by fellow-England squad member Joe Cole, gave West Ham a deserved lead in the 18th minute.

Eoin Jess headed the equaliser in the 62nd minute — Bradford's first goal since New Year's Day — but Lampard gave West Ham the points and their first league win of the year in the 75th with another shot from the edge of the box.

COVENTRY CITY 2 CHARLTON 2

Craig Bellamy had Coventry ahead early on, banging in from close range after Charlton keeper Sasa Ilic dropped the ball, but Richard Rufus equalised with a similarly scruffy goal in the 22nd minute.

Jonatan Johansson gave Charlton the lead in the first minute of the second half but John Hartson equalised

in the 67th minute with his first goal since arriving earlier this month, another mishit.

IPSWICH TOWN 2 EVERTON 0

Ipswich had lost their last five games but ended the run with two late goals.

Mark Burchill, making his Ipswich debut after moving on loan from Celtic this week, hit the post early on but the game turned 20 minutes from time when Everton had defender Alex Nyarko sent off for a second booking. Matt Holland took advantage of the extra space to put Ipswich ahead in the 82nd minute and Alun Armstrong got the second two minutes later.

LEICESTER CITY 2 SUNDERLAND 0

Dean Sturridge headed in a Frank Sinclair cross after half an hour to put Leicester ahead.

Sunderland midfielder John Oster was sent off after two bad tackles 10 minutes into the second half and Leicester soon took advantage when Ade Akinbiyi bundled in the second.

Sunderland have now lost three and drawn two of their last five league games.

DERBY COUNTY 1 ASTON VILLA 0

Deon Burton penalty, after he had been felled by Steve Staunton, settled a disappointing game but Derby will be delighted to take the points which keep them edging towards safety.

M'BROUGH 0 SOUTHAMPTON 1

Mark Draper's low shot after 49 minutes condemned Middlesbrough to their first league defeat in



Leeds striker Robbie Keane leaps over Tottenham goalkeeper Neil Sullivan during the clash at White Hart Lane.

11 games.

Mark Schwarzer made two good early saves as Southampton made the early running but Middlesbrough's Alen Boksic hit the bar and had a shot cleared off the line.

NEWCASTLE UTD 0 MAN. CITY 1

Newcastle fans had waited six weeks to see their team and two months to see Alan Shearer, but booed the players off after a poor display.

City, without a league win since December 9, took the points with a 61st-minute Shaun Goater goal following a great run by Andrei Kanchelskis.

TOTTENHAM 1 LEEDS UNITED 2

Leeds came from behind to inflict Tottenham's first home league defeat of the season and first anywhere in 10 games.

The opener was a tale of two Ferdinands as Leeds's Rio sent a poor defensive header straight to Sergio Rebrov who set up Spurs striker Les, cousin of Rio, to pass Nigel Martyn.

Ian Harte equalised from the spot in the 45th minute after Gary Doherty had tripped Ian Bowyer.

It was the first league goal Tottenham had conceded in six games and they conceded a second in the 57th minute when Ian Bowyer's long shot somehow found a way through a sea of legs and over the line.

Manchester United	6	Arsenal	1
Bradford City	1	West Ham United	2
Coventry City	2	Charlton Athletic	2
Derby County	1	Aston Villa	0
Ipswich Town	2	Everton	0
Leicester City	2	Sunderland	0
Middlesbrough	0	Southampton	1
Newcastle United	0	Manchester City	1
Tottenham Hotspur	1	Leeds United	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Manchester United	28	20	6	2	65	18	66
2. Arsenal	28	14	8	6	44	29	50
3. Liverpool	26	13	6	7	47	28	45
4. Sunderland	28	12	8	8	32	27	44
5. Ipswich Town	27	13	4	10	39	33	43
6. Leeds United	28	12	7	9	41	36	43
7. Leicester City	27	12	6	9	29	29	42
8. Charlton Athletic	28	11	8	9	38	40	41
9. Chelsea	26	10	8	8	48	33	38
10. Southampton	27	10	8	9	32	34	38
11. Newcastle United	27	11	4	12	32	38	37
12. Tottenham Hotspur	28	9	9	10	32	36	36
13. West Ham	27	8	11	8	35	32	35
14. Aston Villa	26	8	9	9	28	28	33
15. Everton	28	8	7	13	30	42	31
16. Derby County	28	7	10	11	28	43	31
17. Middlesbrough	28	5	12	11	31	35	27
18. Manchester City	28	6	8	14	31	46	26
19. Coventry City	28	5	8	15	26	48	23
20. Bradford City	27	3	7	17	17	50	16



Manchester United's striker Dwight Yorke (middle) tussles with Arsenal's Ray Parlour (left) for the ball.

Worthington Cup Final

LIVERPOOL 1 BIRMINGHAM CITY 1
(after extra time)
LIVERPOOL WIN 5-4 ON PENALTIES.

Liverpool won the League Cup for a record sixth time by beating first division Birmingham 5-4 on penalties after the teams finished level at 1-1 after extra time.

Liverpool had looked set to win the trophy in normal time courtesy of Robbie Fowler's superb 20-metre strike after 30 minutes. Sander Westerveld played a long ball which Emile Heskey headed it into the path of Fowler. The England striker saw Birmingham 'keeper Ian Bennett off his line, took one bounce and volleyed brilliantly to send Liverpool into the lead.

The game looked all but over in injury time until Stephane Henchoz's ill timed tackle caught Blues captain Martin O'Conner in the box. Darren Purse bravely stepped up to send the game into a tense extra-time period where the Blues were denied a penalty and Dietmar Hamann hit the post.

In the first ever shoot-out in a major English final Liverpool keeper Sander Westerveld saved from Martin Grainger and Andrew Johnson to earn Liverpool a place in next year's UEFA Cup.

MURPHY'S LAW

By Julian Murphy

The race for the main prize may have been decided before Christmas, but there is still plenty of life in the English Premier League.

Manchester United has again cantered away from the field and should have wrapped up their seventh title in nine years in a couple of months. Arsenal, the only side within shouting distance of United, have shown much improvement since the New Year and seem to have a lock on the all-important second place. Despite their Sunday pummelling at the hands of United, they are looking good for the FA Cup and are not completely without hope in the Champions League. There are some positive signs for the future.

Last season Liverpool failed to secure third place and a Champions League play-off berth when they lost at Bradford City on the final day. They are desperate not to make the same mistake this time around and have played some scintillating football of late. The League Cup winners will start favourites against FC Porto in the quarterfinals of the UEFA Cup and are probably favourites for the FA Cup. They are arguably the form team in England at the moment, but the big question is whether all their cup distractions will hinder their league performance.

Two teams that will be hoping that the Reds stutter are Sunderland and Ipswich. Even though Kevin Phillips has failed to repeat his goal-scoring effort of last season, Sunderland have had another marvellous campaign and will look to reward their passionate supporters with a position in the most lucrative league of all.

Ipswich Town are in the fortunate position of playing well above anyone's expectations and anything they can achieve before the end of the season will be seen as a bonus. Perhaps being free of any pressure will allow them to continue to play attacking football as they have since the rejoined the top flight. The problem for both Sunderland and Ipswich is that they have both been suffering lean patches over the past month. Their league form has dipped and they may run out of steam before May comes around.

Leeds United were the side that pipped Liverpool for third last year and it has led them to some green pastures indeed. They have already qualified for the quarterfinals of the Champions League: a fantastic achievement considering some of the teams they have had to overcome. Their progress in this competition highlights the great potential that exists in David O'Leary's young side.

If Leeds can avoid another poor run with injuries, and show some consistency throughout the long and gruelling season, there is no reason why they can't be serious title contenders next season.

Perhaps Leeds also needs Lee Bowyer to continue his off-field antics because it hasn't affected his playing performances. If anything, he has stepped up a gear and rarely a Leeds game passes without him playing a significant role. Bowyer scored the winner in last weekend's impressive 2-1 win over Tottenham, as his side became the first team to beat Spurs at White Hart Lane in the Premiership this season.

With Harry Kewell missing much of the season through injury, Bowyer has become the linchpin in the Leeds midfield. And there are promising signs for the Eiland Road faithful. Kewell is making the first tentative steps on the comeback trail after his long lay-off and will be keen to make up for lost time. Rio Ferdinand appears to be settling in the defence and with Robbie Keane, Alan Smith and Mark Viduka up front, Leeds have plenty of attacking options. Undoubtedly the best thing for Leeds is that the core of the side are still in their early twenties.

Leeds has taken a fancy to European competition and their priority will continue to be the Champions League. However, short of winning the European Cup, they will have to knock Liverpool out of third spot to have another shot next year. The Reds are two points clear with two games in hand, yet it is not beyond the realms of possibility for Leeds to sneak in. A couple of months ago they were in the wrong half of the table so they have definitely turned things around.

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until March 14)



1	Brazil	818	70	Zimbabwe	492	139	St Lucia	274
2	France	799	71	Kuwait	490	140	Korea DPR	265
3	Argentina	769	72	Macedonia FYR	487	140	Luxemburg	265
4	Italy	740	73	Bosnia-Herz	485	142	Tanzania	261
5	Czech Republic	739	74	Uzbekistan	482	143	Grenada	250
6	Portugal	736	75	AUSTRALIA	480	144	Bangladesh	244
7	Spain	732	76	Albania	479	144	Antigua and Barbuda	244
8	Netherlands	706	77	China PR	477	146	Andorra	242
9	Yugoslavia	705	78	Cuba	474	146	St Kitts & Nevis	242
10	Paraguay	704	78	Guinea	474	148	Liechtenstein	241
11	Germany	703	80	Algeria	471	149	Benin	239
12	Mexico	688	81	Iraq	470	150	Botswana	234
13	Romania	681	82	Togo	468	151	Sri Lanka	226
14	Norway	673	83	Liberia	466	152	Dominica	221
14	Colombia	673	84	El Salvador	459	153	Bermuda	218
16	United States	657	85	Haiti	458	154	Maldives	215
17	England	655	86	Namibia	456	154	Gambia	215
18	Croatia	654	87	Lithuania	455	156	Cape Verde Is	209
19	South Africa	633	88	Congo	453	157	Dominican Rep	206
20	Russia	632	89	Senegal	450	158	Eritrea	196
21	Slovakia	629	90	New Zealand	447	159	Cayman Islands	193
22	Chile	628	91	Gabon	441	160	Yemen	190
23	Denmark	624	92	Armenia	440	161	Mauritania	188
24	Sweden	622	93	Latvia	436	162	Chinese Taipei	186
25	Scotland	610	93	Northern Ireland	436	163	Kyrgyzstan	175
26	Tunisia	609	95	Moldova	429	164	Chad	173
27	Belgium	608	96	Indonesia	426	164	Surinam	173
28	Morocco	606	96	Belarus	426	166	Laos	170
29	Trinidad & Tobago		98	Mali	423	167	British Virgin Is.	169
30	Turkey	597	99	Vietnam SR	419	168	Nepal	166
31	Ireland Republic	594	100	Qatar	418	169	Vanuatu	163
32	Saudi Arabia	591	101	Singapore	414	170	San Marino	158
33	Uruguay	589	102	Syria	411	170	Cambodia	158
33	Egypt	589	103	Uganda	409	172	Cook Islands	156
35	Iran	587	104	Jordan	407	173	Palestine	152
36	Ukraine	585	104	Kenya	407	174	Samoa	139
36	Slovenia	585	106	Barbados	406	175	Netherlands Ant	134
38	Poland	584	107	Oman	393	176	Central Afr Rep	127
39	Israel	582	108	Malaysia	389	177	Guinea-Bissau	126
40	Japan	581	109	Wales	385	178	Bahamas	117
40	Cameroon	581	110	Lebanon	382	179	Philippines	115
42	Korea Republic	579	111	Venezuela	376	179	Macao	115
43	Greece	572	112	Malawi	364	179	Sao Tome e Principe	115
44	Austria	570	112	Madagascar	364	182	Niger	107
45	Jamaica	559	114	Mozambique	361	183	Guyana	105
46	Peru	558	115	Libya	351	184	Aruba	100
47	Honduras	557	116	Azerbaijan	348	185	Tonga	98
48	Cote d'Ivoire	554	117	Mauritius	343	186	Belize	93
48	Hungary	554	118	Faroe Islands	334	187	Eq Guinea	90
50	Zambia	553	119	Malta	324	188	Seychelles	83
51	Nigeria	546	120	Kazakhstan	322	189	Djibouti	80
52	Bulgaria	544	121	Panama	318	190	Pakistan	72
52	Iceland	544	122	India	314	191	Nicaragua	71
54	Ecuador	542	123	Hong Kong	310	192	PNG	65
54	Angola	542	124	Myanmar	307	193	Darussalam	64
56	Costa Rica	536	125	Burundi	306	194	Somalia	59
57	Guatemala	532	126	Turkmenistan	304	195	Puerto Rico	53
58	Ghana	529	127	Swaziland	302	196	Mongolia	52
58	Switzerland	529	127	St Vincent/Gr	302	197	Anguilla	35
60	Finland	528	129	Bahrain	299	198	US Virgin Islands	33
61	Thailand	521	129	Rwanda	299	199	Guam	29
62	Cyprus	519	131	Sierra Leone	290	200	Turks and Caicos Islands	22
63	Canada	515	132	Solomon Islands	288	201	Bhutan	15
64	United Arab Emirates		132	Lesotho	288	202	Montserrat	11
65	Bolivia	507	132	Fiji	288	203	American Samoa	8
66	Georgia	506	135	Sudan	287			
67	Estonia	498	135	Tahiti	287			
68	Burkina Faso	497	137	Ethiopia	282			
69	Congo DR	495	138	Tajikistan	281			

Note: Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.

UEFA CUP Italian Clubs Crash Out



Liverpool's Markus Babbel and Dietmar Hamman celebrate after their win over Roma.

All three Italian clubs were knocked out of the UEFA Cup last week, leaving Serie A without a team in the last eight of a competition it once dominated for the second successive season.

Inter Milan, AS Roma and Parma were all eliminated with Inter victims of the biggest shock of all in a match marred by crowd trouble.

They crashed 2-0 at home to unfancied Spanish provincial side Alaves, who went through 5-3 on aggregate after a 3-3 draw in Spain penultimate week.

UEFA Cup winners in 1991, 1994 and 1998, Inter will almost certainly face an investigation as angry fans vented their frustration on

yet another abject display in an already woeful season by hurling bottles and seats onto the pitch.

AS Roma won 1-0 at Liverpool but went out 2-1 on aggregate, while Parma completed the unhappy trilogy despite a 3-2 second leg win over PSV Eindhoven.

The Dutch champions, who won the first leg 2-1 at home last week, went through on the away goals rule after the sides finished 4-4 on aggregate.

Their collective failure is in stark contrast to the way Italian sides dominated the UEFA Cup for much of the recent past. They won the trophy eight times in 11 seasons between 1989 and 1999.

Controversy trails Liverpool into Q-Finals

Liverpool lost 1-0 at home to AS Roma but still reached the UEFA Cup quarter-finals last week after a controversial refereeing display from Jose Maria Garcia-Aranda.

The Serie A leaders, 2-0 down from the first leg in the Olympic Stadium penultimate week, halved the deficit with 25 minutes remaining with a stunning long-distance drive from Uruguayan substitute Gianni Guigou.

But the Spanish official then incensed the Italians with 13 minutes left after appearing to award a penalty for handball, only to change his mind.

Garcia-Aranda twice pointed to the penalty spot after Vincenzo Montella's attempted cross struck the hand of Liverpool defender Markus Babbel.

But with the Roma players celebrating a potential lifeline, the referee controversially awarded a corner instead.

Liverpool's Michael Owen, scorer of both goals in the first leg in Rome, had earlier seen his 60th minute penalty saved by Francesco Antonioli.

Liverpool coach Gerard Houllier said: "We are just very proud and very happy to be through because we have beaten a very, very important team in Europe."



Celta Vigo's Gustavo Lopez (left) is challenged by Stuttgart's Roberto Pinto during their UEFA Cup clash.

Spanish Quartet sail through

All four Spanish sides survived to set up two all-Spanish quarter-finals: Alaves v Rayo Vallecano and former European champions Barcelona v Celta Vigo.

The two other matches in the last eight will be between former European champions Porto and Liverpool, while Kaiserslautern will meet another former European champion, PSV Eindhoven. The first legs will be on March 8 and the return games on March 15.

Former Manchester United winger Jordi Cruyff and Ivan Tomic both scored

in the last 12 minutes to secure victory for Alaves, enjoying their first-ever season in Europe.

Barcelona hammered AEK Athens 5-0 for a 6-0 aggregate victory;

Vallecano's 2-1 win at Bordeaux wrapped up their 6-2 aggregate success, while Celta Vigo left it late to beat VfB Stuttgart 2-1 after drawing 0-0 in Germany penultimate week.

Alexander Mostovoi hit the winning goal in the 85th minute to give Celta their third consecutive slot in the last eight.

Luis Enrique was Barcelona's inspiration against the Greek side with a 38-minute hat-trick. Rivaldo and Gerard, from the penalty spot, added the others.

UEFA CUP Q-FINALS	
Kaiserslautern (Germany)	v PSV Eindhoven (Netherlands)
Barcelona (Spain)	v Celta Vigo (Spain)
Alaves (Spain)	v Rayo Vallecano (Spain)
Porto (Portugal)	v Liverpool (England)
First leg - March 8	
Second leg - March 15	



WORLD RESULTS ... WORLD RESULTS ...

FRENCH CUP

MONACO, LYON REACH CUP SEMIFINALS

A first-half goal by playmaker Marcelo Gallardo helped Monaco beat second division Chateauroux 1-0 to reach the French League Cup semi-finals last week.

Gallardo's fine cross-shot from 15 metres just before the half-hour mark was enough to stop Chateauroux.

The second division side were seeking a third top flight scalp after they knocked out Olympique Marseille and Bordeaux in the previous rounds.

Chateauroux squandered their best chance to equalise when Benjamin Nivet shot wide inside the box with 20 minutes to go.

Monaco lost defender Philippe Christanval after 10 minutes through injury and he was replaced by Rafael Marquez.

Ambitious Olympique Lyon made it through to the last four by beating third division Amiens 2-0 away thanks to a double strike by playmaker Steed Malbranque.



Lyon's Brazilian-born striker, Edmilson celebrates his team's win over Amiens.

Malbranque opened the scoring in the 19th minute and put the match beyond doubt on the hour when he ran through the Amiens defence unchallenged to grab his second of the night.

The result means Lyon are still chasing four trophies.

They have a chance to progress in the Champions League, after holding English premier league Arsenal to a 1-1 draw at Highbury last week, and are also chasing a French league and cup double as well as the League Cup.

The League Cup quarter-final between troubled St Etienne and second division Niort, as well as the match between Nantes and Troyes have yet to be fixed.

League Cup Quater Finals

Niort (II) 3 St Etienne 2, Chateauroux (II) 0 Monaco 1, Amiens (III) 0 Olympique Lyon 2, Date to be announced: Troyes v Nantes

First Division

Troyes 3 Stade Rennes 1

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

MIDWEEK HANGOVER SLOWS DOWN BAYERN

Bayern Munich once again suffered from a Champions League hangover as they only managed a 1-1 draw at home to Cologne in the German First Division last week.

Bayern failed to recapture the form which inspired them to a brilliant 3-0 win at Spartak Moscow three days earlier but nevertheless stayed two points clear at the top.

It was the sixth time in a row the Munich club failed to win a Bundesliga match on the back of a Champions League game.

Cologne, last season's second division champions, opened the scoring through midfielder Markus Kreuz from a counter-attack in the 25th minute and then wasted several opportunities to inflict further punishment on the champions.

Striker Carsten Jancker saved Bayern from an embarrassing defeat in front of their own fans when he headed home from a Mehmet Scholl free kick in the 65th minute.

Schalke 04 remained two points behind after their eagerly anticipated Ruhr Valley derby at home to rivals Borussia Dortmund produced a relatively uneventful goalless draw.

Dortmund, emerging from the lean spell which followed their 1997 European Cup triumph, also trail the leaders by two points but are third on goal difference.

The Gelsenkirchen club, playing before a capacity 62,000 crowd, had the most chances with Joerg Boehme, fellow midfielder Andreas Moeller and striker Emile Mpenza all coming close.

The best opportunity for Dortmund fell to substitute Giuseppe Reina, who lost his duel with Schalke goalkeeper Oliver Reck nine minutes from time.

At least Schalke are still the only Bundesliga side yet to lose a home match this season.

"Both sides showed too much respect for their opponents," said Schalke coach Huub Stevens. "Both teams were afraid of losing and reluctant to take risks."

"I know our fans would have loved to see us beat Dortmund but sometimes you have to be content with a draw."

Last season's Bundesliga runners-up Bayer Leverkusen, who slumped to a shock 3-1 home defeat to strugglers Energie Cottbus on Friday, are now fourth, three points behind Bayern.



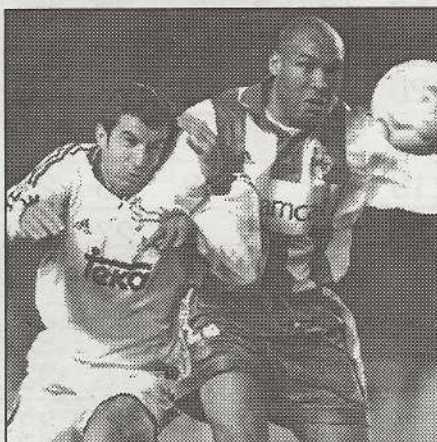
Dortmund striker, Fredi Bobic (left in aerial battle with Schalke's Ebbe Sand's (middle) and Michael Bueskens over the weekend.

Kaiserslautern 0 Hansa Rostock 1, VfL Bochum 0 VfB Stuttgart 0, SC Freiburg 0 TSV 1860 Munich 3, Bayern Munich 1 Cologne 1, Hamburg SV 3 VfL Wolfsburg 2, Schalke 04 0 Borussia Dortmund 0, Eintracht Frankfurt 1 Werder Bremen 2, Bayer Leverkusen 1 Energie Cottbus 3, Hertha Berlin v SpVgg Unterhaching (postponed).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Bayern Munich	23	13	4	6	45	25	43
2. Schalke 04	23	12	5	6	43	25	41
3. Borussia Dortmund	23	12	5	6	35	28	41
4. Bayer Leverkusen	23	12	4	7	40	28	40
5. Hertha Berlin	22	12	1	9	44	39	37
6. Kaiserslautern	23	11	4	8	32	30	37
7. SC Freiburg	23	9	7	7	30	24	34
8. Werder Bremen	23	9	7	7	32	32	34
9. VfL Wolfsburg	23	8	8	7	42	31	32
10. 1860 Munich	23	8	7	8	30	37	31
11. Cologne	23	8	6	9	40	37	30
12. Hansa Rostock	23	8	4	11	22	25	28
13. Hamburg SV	23	8	3	12	45	27	27
14. Eintracht Frankfurt	23	8	3	12	29	40	27
15. Energie Cottbus	23	8	2	13	29	39	26
16. Unterhaching	22	6	6	10	21	35	24
17. VfB Stuttgart	23	5	7	11	31	37	22
18. VfL Bochum	23	5	5	13	19	43	20

PRIMERA LIGA

MADRID'S LEAD REDUCED



Luis Figo (left) struggles with Helder, of Deportivo La Coruna.

Deportivo La Coruna came from two goals down to force a deserved draw against the leaders. Real got an early opener after Portuguese defender Helder headed into his own net. They then went 2-0 up just before the break after Luis Figo coolly converted a controversial penalty.

But Deportivo dominated the match and set up a nail-biting second half after Djalminha cheekily chipped home from the penalty spot after 51 minutes. After hitting the post four times they finally drew level in the 84th minute through a superb chipped shot from substitute Diego Tristan.

Two of Spain's UEFA Cup quarter-finalists shared the honours in this hard-fought encounter. The league's top scorer, Alaves's Javi Moreno, celebrated his call up to the national squad by notching his 17th goal of the season with a fine half volley on 32 minutes. Their lead was extended when Tomas turned the ball into his own net on 70 minutes.

Celta clawed their way back in the last 14 minutes with two headers, one from Russia's Alexander Mostovoi and the other from Brazilian Edu a minute from time.

Bilbao maintained their impressive home form with a confident win over strugglers Numancia. Joseba Etxeberria drilled in after some goalmouth pinball on 40 minutes. He then turned provider as his cross was volleyed in by Javi Gonzalez three minutes after the break. The visitors pulled a goal back with a well worked free kick from Jose Manuel but Ismael Urzaiz sealed the win with a trademark header on 78 minutes.

Patrick Kluivert scored his first goals in 10 games as he helped himself to a double that sent the Catalan giants to victory over John Toshack's strugglers. His first came after he latched on to a neat Luis Enrique pass, took his markers wide and tucked the ball past keeper Alberto on 39 minutes.

His second on 61 minutes was a fine solo effort, coming after he checked past two defenders and chipped over Alberto. Substitute Xavi added the third with a deflected drive on 78 minutes.

Malaga were fortunate to come away with a win after Las Palmas dominated the game but failed to make the most of a host of scoring opportunities. Croatian international Robert Jarni put Las Palmas ahead when his whipped free kick made its way through a forest of players after 16 minutes.

Alaves 2 Celta Vigo 2, Athletic Bilbao 3 Numancia 1, Barcelona 3 Real Sociedad 0, Malaga 2 Las Palmas 1, Racing Santander 2 Real Mallorca 1, Rayo Vallecano 1 Espanyol 1, Real Oviedo 2 Osasuna 3, Valencia 3 Villarreal 1, Valladolid 2 Real Zaragoza 0, Deportivo Coruna 2 Real Madrid 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Real Madrid	24	16	4	4	54	27	52
2. Deportivo	24	14	6	4	47	26	48
3. Valencia	24	13	6	5	39	17	45
4. Barcelona	24	13	4	7	51	34	43
5. Villarreal	24	11	5	8	32	27	38
6. Mallorca	24	10	8	6	33	31	38
7. Rayo Vallecano	24	8	10	6	43	38	34
8. Alaves	24	10	4	10	34	31	34
9. Athletic Bilbao	24	9	6	9	33	36	33
10. Valladolid	24	7	11	6	28	27	32
11. Espanyol	24	9	4	11	31	28	31
12. Malaga	24	9	4	11	37	38	31
13. Las Palmas	24	9	4	11	25	41	31
14. Real Zaragoza	24	7	9	8	35	34	30
15. Celta Vigo	24	7	8	9	29	35	29
16. Real Oviedo	24	8	3	13	31	45	27
17. Numancia	24	6	5	13	24	41	23
18. Real Sociedad	24	5	6	13	26	50	21
19. Santander	24	5	5	14	28	41	20
20. Osasuna	24	4	8	12	25	38	20

WORLD LEAGUES

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

Ajax Amsterdam 2 Utrecht 0, Feyenoord 1 PSV Eindhoven 2, Groningen 0 NAC Breda 0, Twente Enschede 2 Vitesse Arnhem 1, RKC, Waalwijk 1 Fortuna Sittard 0, AZ Alkmaar 2 Roda JC Kerkrade 4, NEC Nijmegen 0 Sparta Rotterdam 3, Willem II Tilburg 1 Heerenveen 6.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. PSV Eindhoven	23	17	5	1	49	14	56
2. Feyenoord	22	17	1	4	48	19	52
3. Ajax Amsterdam	22	13	4	5	54	26	43
4. Vitesse Arnhem	22	11	5	6	41	36	38
5. Roda JC	22	11	4	7	41	29	37
6. RKC Waalwijk	22	10	7	5	28	18	37
7. Utrecht	21	9	4	8	38	34	31
8. Willem II	22	8	7	7	34	33	31
9. NEC Nijmegen	22	6	11	5	29	28	29
10. NAC Breda	22	8	5	9	29	34	29
11. Twente Enschede	22	7	7	8	33	37	28
12. Groningen	22	7	5	10	27	33	26
13. Heerenveen	21	6	8	7	27	29	26
14. AZ Alkmaar	22	7	5	10	33	44	26
15. Graafschap	22	5	2	15	28	45	17
16. Sparta Rotterdam	23	4	5	14	30	45	17
17. Roosendaal	22	4	1	17	29	61	13
18. Fortuna Sittard	22	2	6	14	14	46	12

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Celtic 1 Hibernian 1, Dundee 0 Rangers 1, Hearts 7 Dunfermline Athletic 1, Kilmarnock 0 Dundee United 0, St Mirren 0 Motherwell 1, Aberdeen v St Johnstone (postponed).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Celtic	28	23	4	1	72	22	73
2. Rangers	27	19	3	5	54	25	60
3. Hibernian	28	17	8	3	50	19	59
4. Kilmarnock	28	13	5	10	34	36	44
5. Hearts	28	11	6	11	45	41	39
6. Dunfermline	29	10	7	12	28	41	37
7. Motherwell	29	10	5	14	34	42	35
8. St Johnstone	27	7	10	10	27	38	31
9. Dundee	27	8	6	13	37	35	30
10. Aberdeen	26	6	9	11	28	40	27
11. Dundee United	28	3	6	19	21	52	15
12. St Mirren	29	4	3	22	19	58	15

BELGIUM FIRST DIVISION

Ghent 0 Club Bruges 2, Westerlo 2 Anderlecht 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Anderlecht	23	19	4	0	68	19	61
2. Club Bruges	23	17	5	1	65	18	56
3. Standard Liege	23	12	7	4	54	26	43
4. Ghent	23	12	6	5	45	33	42
5. Westerlo	23	12	5	6	44	33	41
6. Mouscron	23	11	4	8	45	31	37
7. Germinal B'shot	23	11	3	9	42	34	36
8. Charleroi	23	11	3	9	38	41	36
9. Lierse	23	10	5	8	35	29	35
10. Lokeren	23	9	7	7	34	32	34
11. Beveren	23	8	6	9	22	43	30
12. Genk	23	7	6	10	28	34	27
13. Antwerp	23	7	3	13	25	34	24
14. Aalst	23	5	5	13	23	49	20
15. Harelbeke	23	5	1	17	28	66	16
16. Sint-Truiden	23	4	4	15	22	41	16
17. Mechelen	23	2	6	15	27	53	12
18. La Louviere	23	1	8	14	15	44	11

PORTUGUESE TOP SIX

Pacos Ferreira 0 Uniao Leiria 0, Campomaiorense 0 Beira Mar 2, Farense 1 Aves 0, Alverca 4 Braga 1, Benfica 0 Boavista 0, Sporting 3 Gil Vicente 1, Belenenses 0 Estrela Amadora 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Boavista	22	13	7	2	39	13	46
2. Benfica	22	13	5	4	39	21	44
3. Sporting	22	13	3	6	38	24	42
4. Porto	21	13	2	6	40	18	41
5. Braga	22	11	7	4	34	26	40
6. Belenenses	22	10	6	6	27	19	36



QANTAS

THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA

National Soccer League	TOTAL						PTS	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A		P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
SOUTH MELBOURNE	20	13	5	2	42	15	44	10	8	2	0	27	6	10	5	3	2	15	9
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	18	12	4	2	43	22	40	9	6	2	1	21	10	9	6	2	1	22	11
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	20	12	4	4	38	21	40	9	6	2	1	19	9	11	6	2	3	19	12
PERTH GLORY	20	11	6	3	47	22	39	11	8	2	1	31	8	9	3	4	2	16	14
MARCONI STALLIONS	20	10	5	5	34	27	35	11	6	2	3	22	16	9	4	3	2	12	11
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	20	10	3	7	40	32	33	10	6	2	2	20	11	10	4	1	5	20	21
PARRAMATTA POWER	20	9	2	9	30	28	29	10	4	1	5	17	17	10	5	1	4	13	11
SYDNEY UNITED	20	8	5	7	30	36	29	9	5	3	1	15	14	11	3	2	6	15	25
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	19	8	3	8	31	35	27	10	5	2	3	22	19	9	3	1	5	9	16
NORTHERN SPIRIT	19	7	4	8	25	23	25	10	3	3	4	9	9	9	4	1	4	16	15
FOOTBALL KINGZ	20	6	5	9	27	31	23	9	4	2	3	15	9	11	2	3	6	12	22
CANBERRA COSMOS	20	6	4	10	29	32	22	9	2	2	5	12	13	11	4	2	5	17	19
BRISBANE STRIKERS	20	5	6	9	32	37	21	9	4	3	2	20	13	11	1	3	7	12	24
NEWCASTLE UNITED	20	4	8	8	18	33	20	11	3	2	6	9	19	9	1	6	2	9	14
EASTERN PRIDE	20	3	4	13	22	33	13	10	1	4	4	10	15	10	2	0	8	12	18

Matches played against Carlton will result in all teams being awarded a 3-0 win and 3 competition points

MARCONI STALLIONS

(Gibson 22, Trajanovski 56, Thompson 60 & 68, Brownlie 93+)

SYDNEY UNITED

(Awaritefe 1, Pondeljak 64)

Venue: Marconi Stadium. Crowd: 5,420. Referee: M. Breeze.

Cautions: Genc (SU) 36, Maric (SU) 49, Arambasic (SU) 65, Awaritefe (SU) 70, Burt (SU) 77, Costanzo (MS) 87.

Teams: MARCONI STALLIONS: Aceski, Costanzo, Longo, Kim, Afkos, Care, Farah (Malsano 18), Gibson, Bell, Trajanovski (Brownlie 85), Thompson (Torne 88).

SYDNEY UNITED: Tolios, Burt (Bilokapic 80), Plesa, Maric, Rastall, Arrarte (Menapi 63), Genc (Deur 56), Webb, Pondeljak, Awaritefe, Arambasic.

BRISBANE STRIKERS

(Dwyer 19, Buljan 28)

WOLLONGONG WOLVES

(Chipperfield 5, Petrovski 62, Reid 63, Young 72)

Venue: Ballymore. Crowd: 3,000. Referee: S. Micaleff.

Cautions: Rech (BS) 77, Grierson (BS) 89, Petrovski (WW) 51, Huxley (WW) 90. Red Cards: Meredith (BS) 44.

Teams: BRISBANE STRIKERS: Baldock, Steffanuto, Bell, Grierson, Dwyer (Dreger 72m), Pilic (Drake 64m, Baldwin (for Drake) 82m) McLaren, Meredith, Rech, Hews, Buljan.

WOLVES: Barlow, Souris, Ceccoli (Cervinski 80m), Horseley, Reid, Petrovski (Stanton 78m), Young, Chipperfield, Huxley, Blake, Middleby.

LEADING GOALSCORERS

After Round Twenty

D. MORI	(Perth Glory)	13
B. DESPOTOVSKI	(Perth Glory)	12
A. THOMPSON	(Marconi/Carlton)	12
B. BURGESS	(Northern Spirit)	11
S. CHIPPERFIELD	(W'gong Wolves)	10
J. MILLER	(Parramatta Power)	9

ADELAIDE CITY

(Day 68)

FOOTBALL KINGZ

(Cartwright 88)

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium. Crowd: 3,637. Referee: C. Dionis.

Cautions: Osman (FK) 29, Day (AC) 62, Hassell (AC) 91.

Teams: ADELAIDE CITY: Cagalj, Kovacevic, Bucciarelli, Brain, Salapasis (Day 58), Veart, Vidmar, Hassell, Tunbridge, Terminello, Pelosi.

FOOTBALL KINGZ: Eaddy, Lines (Bunce 79), Osman (Van Steeden 79), Ruler (Ngata 71), Davis, Urlovic, Bluhm, Campbell, Cartwright, Douglas, Burton.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

(Surjan 48pen, McBreen 79)

NORTHERN SPIRIT

(Langdon 60, Watkins 63 & 70, Foster 77)

Venue: Marathon Stadium. Crowd: 6,875. Referee: B Hugo.

Cautions: Smith (NS) 16m, Cunico (NS) 26m, Thomas (NS) 64m, Langdon (NS) 78m, Buonavoglia (NU) 86m.

Teams: NEWCASTLE UNITED: Catlin, Roberts, McManus, Sprod (McBreen 70), Dodd, Wilson, Buonavoglia, Tsekenis, Surjan (Johnson 73), Masi (Harper 77), Juchniwicz.

NORTHERN SPIRIT: Perosh, Howson, Cunico, Smith (Slater 45), Bingley, Thomas, Cranney (Ennes 87), Foster, Langdon, Griffiths, Burgess (Watkins 62).

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

(Da Costa 18, Cervinski 20, Poret 21, Lapsansky 54)

SOUTH MELBOURNE

Venue: Knights Stadium. Crowd: 7,320. Referee: M. Shield.

Cautions: A. Vargas (MK) 20, Clarkson (SM) 26, Lozanovski (SM) 49, Pelikan (MK) 53, R. Vargas (MK) 58, Trimboli (SM) Lapsansky (MK) 90.

Teams: MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Acevski, R. Vargas, Porter, Kovacic, Kiratzoglou, A. Vargas (Rajher 82), Da Costa, Cervinski (Sulemani 85), Marth, Jolic, Lapsansky.

SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, Iosifidis (Colosimo 46), DeAmicis, Durakovic, Clarkson (Tolios 85), Panopoulos, Coveny, Trimboli, Boutsianis, Vlahos, Lozanovski (Anastasiadis 59).

PERTH GLORY

(B. Despotovski 19pen, Carbone 43)

EASTERN PRIDE

(Hutchinson 47)

Venue: Perth Oval. Crowd: 11,732. Referee: E. Lennie.

Cautions: Edwards (PG) 13, Fak (EP) 71, Kim (EP) 80.

Red Cards: Edwards (PG) 16.

Teams: PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Roberts, Carbone (Deans 71), Pryce, Harnwell, Valle, Naven, Faria, Mori, Despotovski (Mrdja 85), Edwards.

EASTERN PRIDE: Galekovic, Fak, Gotis, Kim, Bell, Puca, Hutchinson, Sekulovski (Moisiopoulos 79), Atkinson, Conroy, Stergiopoulos.

Player Of The Week



Wollongong Wolves brilliant distributor, PAUL REID, scored a crucial goal against Brisbane.

CANBERRA COSMOS

PARRAMATTA POWER

(Roodenburg 77)

Venue: Bruce Stadium. Crowd: 2,012. Referee: G. Connolly.

Teams: CANBERRA COSMOS: Konstantinou, Anthopoulos, Ravanello (Lyons 70), Imaia (Hagger 72), Castro, Angelucci, Arranz, Hooker, Scott, Miyazawa, Kemp (Cortes 52).

PARRAMATTA POWER: Crews, Barrett, Tobin, Eagleton (Vrkic 61), Ardone (Berry 82), Griffiths (Biggins 70), Brown, Thompson, Santalab, Roodenburg, Bennett.

ROUND 21

(ROUND 14 RESCHEDULE MATCH) TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27

Wollongong Wolves vs Northern Spirit

FRIDAY MARCH 2

Football Kingz vs Perth Glory

Wollongong Wolves vs Parramatta Power

SATURDAY MARCH 3

Canberra Cosmos vs Newcastle United

SUNDAY MARCH 4

Northern Spirit vs Adelaide City

Sydney United vs Melbourne Knights

Sydney Olympic vs Marconi Stallions

Eastern Pride - Bye

SYDNEY OLYMPIC

BYE